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POEMS, &c.

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POEMS,

BY JOHN PENN, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

CONSISTING OF

ORIGINAL WORKS,

IMITATIONS, AND TRANSLATIONS.

Estr.

——— Quo fit, ut omnis
Votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
Vita—— HOR.

Del vario stile, in ch'io piango, e ragiono
Fra le vane speranze——
Ove sia chi per prova intenda *amore*,
Spero trovar—non che perdono.
Ma del mio vaneggiar—è il frutto
—Il pentirsi, e'l conoscer chiaramente,
Che quanto piace al mondo è breve sogno. PETRARCA.

VOL. II.

IMITATIONS AND TRANSLATIONS.

LONDON:

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1801.

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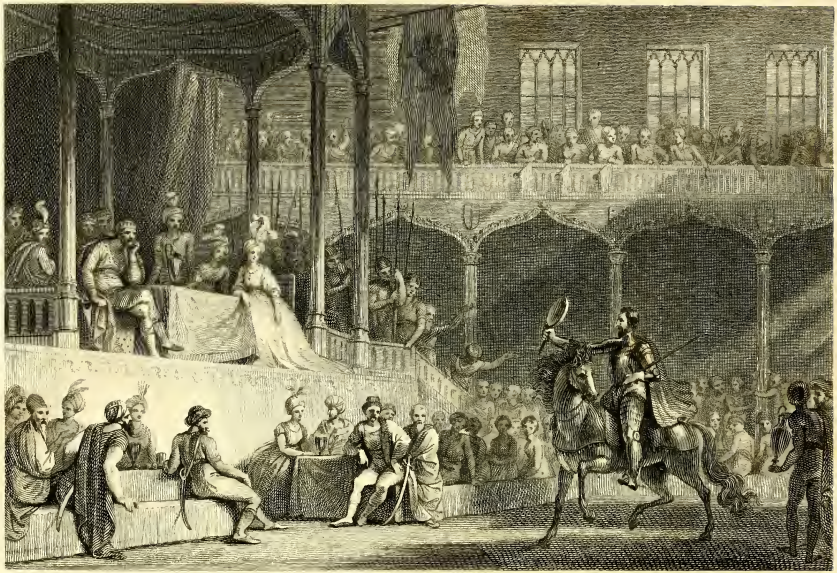
ERRATA.

Page 6. *line* 12, *for* "this," *read*, his.
—— 15. — 5, *for* "goest," *read*, goes.
—— 85. — 2, *for* "these," *read*, there.
—— 122. — 14, *for* "tastes," *read*, taste.
—— 143. — 17, *for* "it has been rightly affirmed," *read*, it would be easily inferred.
—— 256. — 13, *for* "housewise," *read*, housewife.

IMITATIONS

AND

TRANSLATIONS.



Drawn by H Smirke Esq R.A. Engraved by J Parker

In at the halle dore al sodenly
Ther came a knight upon a stede of bras,
And in his hond a brod mirrour of glas. Chaucer's Squire's Tale, Pt I

Published March 1 1810 by J Boydell & Co Cheapside

IMITATIONS, &c.

THE SQUIRE'S TALE.

—— Call up him, that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That own'd the virtuous ring and glass;
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung——
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career.

MILTON.

PART I.

In Sarra's city once, in Tartary, reign'd
A king, who war with Russia's tribes maintain'd;
By which there fell in arms, of splendid fame,
Full many a knight; Cambuscan was his name.

Far through the world his merits were renown'd,
And none, in aught, so excellent was found.
In various virtue kingly, as in birth,
He made his office honour'd through the earth.
Firm in the faith which he profess'd to hold,
Of wealth conspicuous, and as wise as bold;
Rigid in truth and justice, yet inclined
To soft compassion, and of nature kind;
His person comely, fortunate his doom,
So well could he the royal part assume,
So much his qualities the observer strike,
All own'd they never had beheld his like.

This Tartar without peer, this valiant king,
Saw its fair fruits from happy marriage spring;
The younger hope, by Elfeta, his wife,
Camballo call'd, the elder Algarsife.

He had, besides, the youngest of the three,
A daughter fair, whose name was Canace.
But, to pourtray the beauties of the maid,
In vain were aptest eloquence essay'd.
At least my language in the attempt were vain,
And matchless charms my pencil rude restrain,

Whose full idea Rhetoric must impart
With glowing colours, and the stores of Art.
'Tis mine, more humble than the skilful tribe,
Truly to speak, but plainly to describe.

It chanced, since first Cambuscan bore the sway,
When twenty winters now had pass'd away,
(As was, I deem, his custom every year)
He caused, through Sarra's streets, in accent clear,
A feast to be proclaim'd, whose lawful mirth
Might fitly celebrate his day of birth;
The appointed time, the last of March's ides.
Sol now, his station changed, with Mars resides,
Mounted in Aries, from whose angry sign
His burning beams with stronger influence shine.
Changed by his warmth, the temperate gales impart
Forgotten rapture to the cheerless heart:
And as the verdant hues more vivid grow,
Or cloudless skies the coming Season show,
With shrillest melody the quires of air,
On wing, the abundance of their joy declare.
As if protections they had now obtain'd,
Nor fear'd his tyranny, though Winter reign'd,

Presiding at the feast, Cambuscan bore
His crown aloft, and royal vestments wore,
Seen through the hall, at its exalted part,
And graced a banquet, plann'd with matchless art.
Of which to tell the order and array,
It sure would occupy a summer's day.
Nor could it add to my relation force,
To trace the plan of each succeeding course.
I to the narrative shall close adhere.
And so it chanced that while, the tables clear,
And, with its dainties, the third course removed,
The ravish'd king this minstrels' art approved,
In at the entrance was perceived to pass
A knight full sudden, on a steed of brass.
An ample mirror in his hand he held,
And on his finger was a ring beheld.
Unsheath'd beside him hung his shining sword.
Accoutred thus, he sought the royal board;
And, young and old in silence wondering, all,
Their eager eyes pursued him through the hall.

Full richly dress'd, this knight, unseen before,
All, save his head, with armour cover'd o'er,

King, queen, and lords, in order due, salutes;
And his expression so his subject suits,
That did old Gawain* come at our command,
And leave his residence in Fairy land,
His courteous fancy could not mend a word.
Nor he, his preface o'er, his tale deferr'd;
But with a manly voice, and faultless speech,
Observant of the rules professors teach,
To suit our action to our changing phrase,
Enforced the impressive thoughts a thousand ways.
I do not hope to imitate his art,
But the mere matter of the harangue to impart.
He said, " Both India's and Arabia's king,
" Whose gifts to you this solemn day I bring;
" Not uninstructed 'tis your natal day,
" Sends me his tribute of respect to pay.
" On you this brazen steed has he bestow'd,
" Which, with strange power, transports its living
" load,

* Nephew of King Arthur, and esteemed a model of *knightly courtesy*.

" Where'er commanded, in a day and night,
" And safe through showers directs its rapid flight.
" He, a sure safeguard in the realms of air,
" Unharm'd will carry you through foul and fair:
" Or should you wish your airy course to change,
" And lofty regions, wing'd by eagles, range,
" Not less securely would you cleave the skies,
" (Though stealing Sleep o'ercame your watchfull
" eyes)
" While, when you chose, and rightly moved a pin,
" Your journey back would, undelay'd, begin.
" This shining mirror, which my hand sustains,
" Gives the rare privilege, with little pains,
" To see, reflected by its surface true,
" Each ill impending o'er your state and you;
" Reveal'd to see your real friend and foe,
" Nor less in love the turns of fortune know.
" If some bright lady of your court has borne
" Its tender pains, her lover late forsworn,
" This will detect, howe'er conceal'd it be,
" His fickle soul's dissembling subtlety.

" But that this mirror, and the mystic ring
" I bear, alike commission'd from the king,
" Another mark of his regard, be kept,
" He prays that Canace will these accept.
" This ring interprets, with the truth of words,
" Each meaning latent in the tones of birds;
" And, to their sense enlarged, conveys again
" Adapted language from the mouths of men.
" Whether the hand wear this, or purse contain,
" To such as rankling wounds oppress with pain,
" It points what aid the stores of Nature yield,
" And shews each useful simple of the field.
" This naked sword, that glitters at my side,
" To all were dreadful who its powers defied;
" And irresistibly would pierce its stroke
" Through mail, whose thickness match'd the
" spreading oak.
" Vain all attempts to heal the wound it made,
" Till you shall o'er it gently draw the blade.
" While yet the gifts by you possess'd remain,
" Such various virtues shall they still retain."

Thus having spoke, the knight directs his steed
Back through the assembly, and alights with speed.
The steed, reflecting the refulgent beams,
Stands in the court, and without motion seems:
The knight is led to a refreshing meal,
Eased of the incumbrance of his coat of steel.
Pursuant to his will, what presents may
Are duly borne, and without toil, away:
The sword and mirror to a lofty tower;
To Canace her ring, of equal power.
She, sitting at the feast, receives the gift;
But none may hope the brazen horse to lift.
No strength can, equal to the load, be found,
Nor crane, nor pulley, force it from the ground.
They wait, as they must needs, the knight's return,
From him the secret, you shall hear, to learn.

Now mighty throngs, attracted by report,
To see the wondrous beast o'erspread the court,
Intently gazing, and discoursing much:
Such is his size, and his proportions such!
So well his height is suited to his length!
He seems with nags of Lombardy in strength

To vie, in briskness with the Apulian breed.
For 'tis, by each spectator near, agreed,
Nor Art, nor Nature can increase its store
Of excellence, nor add one beauty more.
But their conceptions far it did surpass
How it could move, and yet be made of brass.
That 'twas a fairy work to some it seem'd;
But different some its origin esteem'd.
The notions, bandied in discourse by these,
Sounded like murmurs from a swarm of bees.
They love the tales they read of to rehearse,
And talk of Pegasus, described, in verse,
Like him to spurn the ground, and cleave the air:
Or 'twas the horse of Sinon, they declare,
By wicked demons to this day preserved,
To make them feel the fortune Troy deserved.
Some on the wondrous things their comments made,
Shewn by that mirror, to the tower convey'd;
Surmising, all its virtue was derived
From angles and reflections well contrived.
Some speak their wonder of that sword, at large,
Which arm'd the champion for so fierce a charge.

They call to mind the memorable gash
Of royal Telephus, and spear of ash
His foe Achilles hurl'd; though when its rust
Was scraped, it heal'd him with the scatter'd dust.
The nature of the weapons seem'd allied.
Now dwelt their thoughts on every method tried
To temper steel, and harden best its edge;
The time and art that its success would pledge.
These are unknown, be it confess'd, to me.
They notice next the ring of Canace;
Framed by such new, inexplicable art.
Thus talk the gather'd crowds, ere they depart.
'Twas yet agreed on, by another class,
Our skill produced, from simple ashes, glass;
But glass and ashes were unlike, in all;
Hence rash Surmise might into error fall.
For, till the cause of floods we can explore,
Of tides alternate, or the ocean's roar,
Or nature's works, in gossamer and mist,
Much on its strangeness do we still insist.
Thus they indulged in various talk, nor ceased,
Till the king, rising, left the finish'd feast.

The sun his rapid course had downward bent,
The royal lion noticed in ascent,
When brave Cambuscan, from the exalted place
Where stood his table, moved, with stately pace,
Descending to the pavement, from its floor;
Whence, through the hall, the minstrels march'd before.
Thus to his presence-room the guests retire,
While music speaks the full-resounding quire.
Unnumber'd instruments their powers unite,
And with the raptures of the bless'd delight.
Now gladdest summons to the dance obeys
Each votary gay of Venus, who surveys,
On high from Pisces,* her congenial sign,
Courtiers and dames, the adorers of her shrine.
With beating breasts the signal they await.
The king o'erlooks them from his chair of state.
There, as he sits to view the sprightly ball,
The knight's returning steps his thought recall.

* In the old astrology, Venus was supposed to exert its strongest influence in this sign of the zodiac.

He bows, approaching, and exults to see
His partner doom'd the beauteous Canace.
The faint resemblance of the mirth to catch
In those who saw not, ere they traced the sketch,
Powers of uncommon excellence would ask,
And Youth or Love must prompt them in the task.
Who could describe the dance's varying form,
Or grace unequall'd, through with rapture warm?
Who the coquette's dissembled look askance,
Lest kindling Jealousy should blame the glance?
Launcelot* alone possess'd a suited store
Of lauguage apt, and he is now no more.
While yet the dance detains, the steward's voice
Hastens supplies of wine and spices choice.
The squires and ushers his injunctions hear,
And straight the spices and the wine appear.
Lest, by fatigue o'ercome, their spirits sink,
The wish'd refreshment brought, they eat and drink.
Then, in the house of prayer their duty done,
They sup, illumin'd by the rising sun.

* An eminent knight of the round table, possessing all the accomplishments of a courtier and man of gallantry.

At a king's banquet, plenty, well they know
The portion is of all, both high and low.
This it was now, with excellence of fare
Much beyond all I can imagine rare.

The supper o'er, the noble king goest out
To view the steed, and a resplendent rout,
Ladies and lords, whom courtly forms oblige;
Nor, since old Ilium's memorable siege,
Had any horse such general wonder caused,
Nor less discourse, in praise of any, paused.
The king implores the knight, when they arrive,
The theme, with more precision, to revive
Of those rare qualities the beast display'd,
And laws, in rest or motion, it obey'd.

'Twas then the horse alertly, o'er the ground,
Touch'd by the knight, began to skip and bound.
Who said, " This only will suffice, dread sire,
" Whate'er the adventurous journey you desire,
" That in his ear a secret pin you turn,
" Which from my mouth you shall in private learn;
" And, this perform'd, the country's name declare,
" 'Tis then you wish to visit through the air.

" Nor needs a safe return Invention wrack;
" Another pin, so moved, will bear you back;
" And wheresoe'er the ponderous beast alight,
" Fix'd 'twill remain, in Strength's and Art's despite.
" Should you command it, and this pin be stirr'd,
" 'Twill vanish straight, obedient to a word,
" And at a word return, if those they be
" Which you shall instantly be taught by me.
" And trust, none else, his journey long or short,
" Will boast conveyance of a readier sort."

When from the knight the king enough had gain'd
Of wish'd instruction, and no doubt remain'd,
With joyful heart, and of his present proud,
He sought, expected, the carousing crowd.
The bridle straight was in the tower inclosed,
Where jewel heaps of costliest kind reposed;
But the horse vanishes—I know not how,
Nor shall I dare describe; but suffer now
The revel's mirth the enliven'd guests to absorb,
Till the sky blush with day's returning orb.

Drawn by R. Smirke Esq.R.A.

Engraved by J. Heath.

—— to the tree she goth ful hastily,
And on this faucon loketh pitously Chaucer's Squire's Tale. P.t II.

PART II.

Composing Sleep, Digestion's healthful nurse,
Winks on the band; and warning, lest, averse
From her dull presence, they her aid dismiss,
Salutes them, yawning, with a sluggard's kiss.
The o'erheated blood, they hear the Power suggest,
Asks instant care, and calming hours of rest.
Thankful they hear, and one by one withdrawn,
Confess her prudence in a drowsy yawn;
Her salutary call convenient judge;
Nor, when unsafe, the dregs of pleasure grudge.
The floating fancies of Repletion's brain
To tell at large, were simple as 'tis vain;
Dreams uninspired, of light effect and cause.
Each from late sleep prolong'd refreshment draws;
But not fair Canace: ere this at eve,
She of her father took her custom'd leave,
Unwilling, as becomes the modest fair,
Pale Dissipation's harrass'd looks to wear.

Early she rose, no morning slumber sought;
For the loved presents still engaged her thought,
The wondrous ring, and mirror deem'd so strange.
Oft did her cheek with blushing rapture change;
Nor even in sleep from pleasing care exempt,
The fair one only of her mirror dreamt.
Hence, ere the sun was high, till waking heard
The matrons, to her service proud preferr'd,
She call'd: obedient they attend, but say,
None yet is stirring, and 'tis hardly day.
" Wearied with sleep, 'tis my desire," she cries,
" Straight to walk forth, and instant I would rise."
With busy thought, asssured of her resolve,
How best to do her pleasure they revolve.
The train are trooping at her call survey'd;
Nor later shines, attired, the royal maid
Like the bright sun that, free from clouds, displays
As now, in Aries, more refulgent rays.
Thin vapours only o'er its surface spread,
To sense enlarged, a ruddy light it shed,
When she, in habit for the season fit,
Few of her train, prepared the house to quit.

Along the shady park her way she took,
Fill'd now with joy, where'er she chanced to look,
By every charm that graced the gaudy Spring;
Now struck with wonder at the magic ring,
By which to her the sylvan quire express'd
Their inmost thoughts, yet only sooth'd the rest.
To shun the likeness of a style prolix,
And with no story vain digression mix,
Will profit him who undertakes to rule
The passions, less obedient when they cool.
Lest in my tale description I should waste
On wearied spirits, to its end I haste.
High on a tree, beside whose root the sod,
With sportive joy, the beauteous princess trod,
A falcon perching sent a plaintive sound,
That pierced afar the shadowy region round.
With either wing it smote its breast, that bore
The vestige of its beak, in gushing gore.
By Nature's laws had tears distressful flow'd
From eyes of brutes, that inborn feeling shew'd,
No furious tiger had the sight withstood,
Nor any ruthless rover of the wood.

For to the man who best the merit knew
Of falcons, praise had never seem'd so due;
Nor thus could any shape or plumage boast:
It seem'd some present from a distant coast.
So fast the blood distill'd from every wound,
This falcon nearly with its loss had swoon'd,
And tottering, as it clung, with feeble feet,
Scarce on the branch maintain'd its lofty seat.
The king's fair daughter, Canace, who brought
Not only means to explain her secret thought,
But power sufficient, in the ring she bare,
To hold discourse with every bird of air,
The meaning of its mournful accents knew,
And, with a look of pity, nearer drew.
Below the tree she stretch'd her pendent skirt,
To save in such a fall its limbs from hurt,
When next it fainted, (which might soon arrive,
The falcon scarce, with loss of blood, alive).
There long she stood expecting; but express'd
At last the sympathy that sway'd her breast.
"What is the cause, instruct me," said the fair,
"Why you these unexampled sufferings bear,

" Thrilling each ear with piteous plaints the while?
" Is it some favourite's death, or lover's guile?
" For of all ills, to feeling breasts, the chief
" Are these, and sources of the bitterest grief.
" No other tale, I know, have you to tell,
" Who, your own passion's victim, prove full well
" That selfish Terror wakes not your regret;
" Nor have I seen a foe your safety threat.
" Shew to yourself some pity, I implore;
" Else whither will this tend? for ne'er before
" One instance have I view'd, with troubled thought,
" Of bird or beast that thus its sorrow sought.
" My heart these symptoms of misfortune wring.
" Ah! leave yon bough, and truly, as I spring
" From royal parents, if the power be mine,
" And the sad cause appear why you repine,
" Ere night the ill its remedy shall find;
" (So help me, Heaven, as I have this in mind!)
" And I, that pain no longer may disturb,
" Will to your wounds apply each healing herb."
Then, in the saddest accent, since her birth,
The unhappy falcon shriek'd, and fell to earth.

She seem'd, as senseless as a stone, to fall;
When, bent life's wonted functions to recall,
The beauteous princess, pitying her mishap,
Transferr'd the mourner to her friendly lap.
There laid, and cherish'd, from her trance she woke,
And in the mother-tongue of falcons spoke.
" That tender hearts are best prepared to
" know,
" From their own pain, the extent of others woe,
" Both by the opinions which the wise maintain,
" And wide Example's daily proof, is plain.
" All gentleness from gentle hearts proceeds;
" And yours, I see, for my affliction bleeds,
" Enchanting Canace; and ills which vex
" Feels with the promptness of your softer sex.
" 'Tis not my hope your proffer'd aid to earn,
" But wish that you, what you inquire, may learn;
" And in my sad experience be supplied,
" A useful lesson, and a certain guide."
While one thus speaks her grief, the other hears
Oppress'd with thought, and deluged with her tears.

At length the falcon bade the princess pause;
And, sighing, thus declared her sorrow's cause.
" Here was I bred, (the recollection shocks);
" And our nest poised on yonder ridgy rocks.
" Each tender treatment which the unfledged re-
" ceive,
" I had, and knew not what it was to grieve,
" Till first abroad I dared direct my flight:
" There a young hawk attracted soon my sight.
" All mildness, as I fancied, he appear'd;
" Nor thoughtless Love his treacherous falseness
" fear'd.
" So did he wear Humility's disguise,
" Such shew of truth, such fondness met my eyes,
" So freely Youth's gay pleasure he enjoy'd,
" So lively was his grief, when ills annoy'd,
" None dream'd Deceit had in his actions part;
" But what seem'd greater worth, was deeper art.
" Even as a snake his form in flowers conceals,
" Till he who passes, late his risk reveals;
" Even so this bird, in tenderness a dove,
" Feign'd soft obedience, and attentive love,

" And lavish of professions soon believed,
" This artless breast, in luckless hour deceived.
" As on some tomb rich sculpture we survey,
" But putrid lurks below the unsightly clay;
" Such was the hawk; and thus his purpose screen'd,
" That none could search it, save the inspiring
" fiend.
" And he so press'd a suit, the task of years,
" With kind upbraidings, and with treacherous tears,
" That my poor heart, which well he knew to move,
" Lest love so violent his death should prove,
" Granted whate'er, protesting truth, he craved;
" And only from the wretch my honour saved;
" This point agreed, our union's single bond,
" His should I be, as he was truly fond,
" His should each thought, within my bosom hid,
" Each claim of lawless gallantry forbid.
" Heaven knows this promise I required as just;
" But leagues with treacherous Falsehood who can
" trust?
" Soon as the tiger-hearted suitor found
" Love had his wishes, unresisting, crown'd,

" Our vows exchanged, a master in deceit,
" He fell, with seeming reverence, at my feet.
" With gentle manner, and with soft address,
" Much joy pretending at his new success,
" In art even Jason, fortunate beheld
" Through love, and Trojan Paris he excell'd.
" Nor, since two wives to Lamech link'd, began
" First to display the roving bent of man,
" Nor even since him, the father of mankind,
" Such depth of guile could Observation find.
" Rank'd by their art, beneath him those of old
" Deserved not menial offices to hold.
" None could with thanks so winningly requite.
" To mark his manner was a heavenly sight;
" And none more shew'd, of all the race of birds,
" How graceful gesture dignifies our words.
" If full of truth he seem'd, his merit such,
" The thought unjustly would be deem'd too much
" I to his interest spared, with wakeful zeal,
" Used, like my own, his slightest woes to feel.
" In all, his honour'd will to mine gave law,
" Save where obstructed I my duty saw.

" The worth that makes obedience sweet had he:
" Not power itself possess'd such charms for me.
" Two years and more this heavenly dream en-
" dured,
" And of his fondness I was well assured;
" But Fortune had resolved that he, at last,
" Should leave the scene of our enjoyment pass'd.
" To tell my sorrow were superfluous pain,
" And all my power in such a labour vain;
" But this I can affirm (nor waste my breath),
" Now do I know what are the pangs of death.
" He took his leave one inauspicious morn,
" Seeming constrain'd, in accent so forlorn,
" That when I hear'd him speak, in plaintive tone,
" I thought his grief as poignant as my own.
" Yet, such had seem'd his truth, I fear'd no
" more,
" Nor dreamt of harm, his urgent business o'er.
" Till 'twas dispatch'd enduring what must be,
" I made a virtue of necessity.
" My grief dissembling, though by him unshared,
" Near him I stood; and solemnly declared,

" By holy John, as to our tie was due,
" My future life should, as my past, be true.
" I need not, what he answer'd, here rehearse;
" None bettter speaks than he, and none acts
" worse.
" At length he bent his flight to distant fields.
" When Rest full leisure to Reflection yields,
" This dangerous adage ruled, I deem, his mind,
" ' All are on earth attracted to their kind.'
" Perhaps 'tis noticed by the race of man;
" And change and novelty no less its plan.
" For birds in cages sumptuously are fed,
" Their floor below with softest covering spread;
" And servants store, as waiting on their lord,
" Of honey, sugar, milk, and bread, accord;
" But, when the unfasten'd slider is drawn up,
" The joyous prisoner spurns his brimming cup;
" Swift to the woods escapes, in folly firm;
" And dainties leaves, contented with a worm.
" No sense of interest, and no sacred tie
" Can with Variety's allurement vie.

" Such proved my faithless mate, accursed the
" day!
" Though sprung from generous sires, and young,
" and gay,
" Comely in person, humble, yet not shy,
" He saw a kite, of winning figure fly;
" He saw—and loved! and with relentless haste,
" His falcon's image from his mind effaced.
" His love now honours the detested kite;
" And I in vain deplore my ravish'd right."
Fast, as she ended, from the falcon flow'd
Her tears: she fell again, a senseless load.
Whom, in her lap, fair Canace receives.
The train attendant, with the princess grieves,
Prompt each attention to the oppress'd to shew;
And shrill resounds the voice of Female Woe.
Homeward they bear the falcon, faint and weak,
And bind the wounds inflicted by her beak.
The princess herbs from fields adjoining bears
And salves, the pride of housewifery, prepares,
To heal her bird; and, form'd with care its shed,
Suspends it anxious at her couch's head.

'Tis painted all within of sober blue,
Unchanging Constancy's peculiar hue;
But green denotes a fickle bent without,
Where every bird whose faith is held in doubt.
Titmice, and hawks, and owls, appear to stand,
And the pie hops, with ceaseless noise, at hand.
Her presence, still importunate observed,
Like chattering Censure, shew'd what they deserved.

Here will I leave the falcon, day and night
Tended with care by her protectress bright;
Nor more describe the wonders of the ring,
Till I may show the reconcilement spring
From good Camballo's offices benign,
And the wild hawk his lawless love resign.

Now I proceed to speak of battles dread,
Where, fired with glory, valiant Tartars bled;
And strange adventures, filling with amaze,
Of fame, unequall'd in all former days.

First will I tell you of Cambuscan brave,
To whom proud Conquest many a city gave;
Next him, who Theodora had to wife,
In battle won, the valiant Algarsife,

Condemn'd through danger to delight to pass,
And only rescued by his horse of brass;
Then will I tell you with what champion fought
The adventurous brothers, who the princess sought,
The beauteous Canace; thus hard to win:
And still, where I left off, will next begin.

* * * * * * * * * *

ON THE

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE RICH;

AN IMITATION

OF THE SIXTH SATIRE OF PERSIUS,

ADDRESSED TO THE REV. MR. MASON, 1793.

ARE[1] Aston's hearths yet summon'd to supply
The needful heat autumnal days deny?
O skill'd to draw[2] from British harps anew
Those[3] martial sounds that fear of death subdue;
Or[4] soothing, shew the sufferings Love can cause,
The grief of shepherds, and the garden's laws;

PERSII

SAT. VI.

ADMOVIT jam bruma[1] foco te Basse, Sabino?
Jámne[2] lyra, et tetrico vivunt tibi pectine chordæ?
Mire opifex numeris veterum primordia vocum,
Atque[3] marem strepitum fidis intendisse Latinæ,
Mox[4] juvenes agitare jocos, et pollice honesto

[1] With storms already, Mason, rings my shed;
And sullen fogs o'er Thames's banks are spread,
O'er the proud castle, and the forest shade,
" [2] By godlike poets venerable made."*
[3] For so the bard in whom we all admire,
And own, transfused, the mighty Homer's fire.
[4] Careless of critic tongues, I shape the soil
With changeful fancy, and uncertain toil;
Careless I hear [5] the rainy winds resound,
Or wait their influence [6] on my flocks around.
And if the trite complaint, that upstarts proud
Rise o'er our heads, and every parish crowd,
Assail me,[7] little it disturbs that I,
Fall'n from a sire's and grandsire's dignity,

Egregios lusisse senes. mihi nunc Ligus ora
Intepet, [1] hybernâtque meum mare, quà latus ingens
Dant scopulî et multâ littus se valle receptat.
" [2] Lunaï portum est operæ cognoscere, cives."
[3] Cor jubet hoc Ennî, postquam destertuit esse
Mæonides Quintus pavone ex Pythagoreo.
[4] Hìc ego securus vulgi; et quid præparet [5] Auster
[6] Infelix pecori; [7] securus et angulus ille

* Windsor Forest, ver. 270.

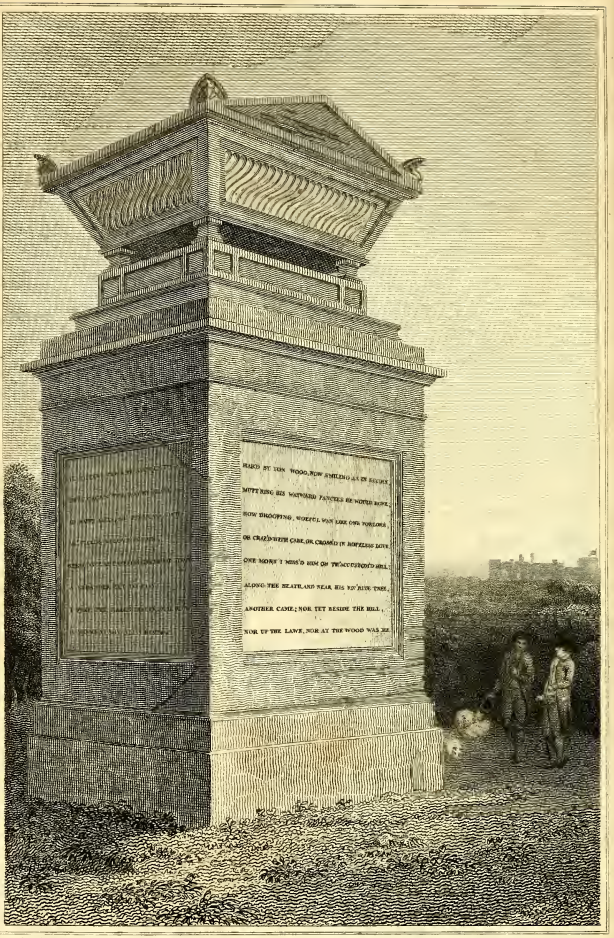
Equal [1] those older ancestors alone,
Whose guiltless eminence the shire will own.
[2] Must I, for this, grow gray before my hour,
[3] Or hail with rapture compound interest's power;
Hoard at the expense of comfort, [4] meanly dine,
And [5] drink the cheapest, and the worst of wine?
[6] But turns are different: for, of twins, [7] the one
Will, save on feast days, all indulgence shun;
Then, for himself, he cooks his treat of sauce,
And follows custom with the lightest loss:
[8] The other, gallant spirit, heaps his board
With meats the richest only can afford.

Vicini nostro quia pinguior; et [1] si adeò omnes
Ditescant orti pejoribus: usque [2] recusem
[3] Curvus ob id minui senio, aut [4] cœnare sinè uncto,
Et [5] signum in vapidâ naso tetigisse lagenâ.
[6] Discrepit his alius. geminos, horroscope, varo
Producis genio. [7] solis natalibus est qui
Tingat olus siccum muriâ vafer in calice emptâ,
Ipse sacrum irrorans patinæ piper. [8] hic bona dente
Grandia magnanimus peragit puer. utar ego, utar:

But, if I would not, angry that they shine,
Toil lest their wealth be reckon'd more than mine,
So neither would I rival their expense.
Scarce 'twere in me a bearable pretence
[1] With turtles fresh my servants' hall to cheer,
[2] Or use my taste to every dish that's dear.
Our bounds are clearly traced: our incomes shew
How far the wants of Moderation go.
[3] Empty your barns; next year they will be stored.
Perhaps, 'tis Duty warns, our aid implored.
[4] Some friend a gainful voyage hopes, till mark!
Blown on [5] the rocks of Scilly, splits his bark:
His all is lost, and to the distant eye
The shiver'd wreck, emerging, points on high,

---

[1] Nec rhombos ideò libertis ponere lautus,
[2] Nec tenuem solers turdarum nôsse salivam.
Messe tenus propriâ vive: et [3] granaria (fas est)
Emole. quid metuas? occa. et seges altera in herbâ est.
Ast vocat officium. [4] trabe rupta, [5] Bruttia saxa
Prendit amicus inops: rémque omnem, surdáque vota



Drawn by R. Freeham — Engraved by T. Lander

Gray's monument at Stoke, with a distant view of Windsor castle.

Published March 1 1811 by J. Hatchard 173 Piccadilly.

Where sea-gulls haunt, amid the ocean's roar:
[1] He gains with labour Cornwall's dreary shore.
That he may save some portion of renown,
[2] Nor bear a mean petition through the town,
Can we not sell? Cries one, "with acres part!
"[3] I know whose heir would take it much to heart.
"Scarce would his funeral decently pass off:
"[4] At promised pomp the nettled squire would scoff.
"What! with impunity the estate impair!"—
But philosophic Gray would little care,
And, by [5] the forty sages unperplex'd,
Hold, [6] such degenerate wants our nation vex'd

Condidit: [1] Ionio jacet ipse in littore, et unà
Ingentes de puppe Dei: jamque obvia mergis
Costa ratis laceræ. nunc et de cespite vivo
Frange aliquid: largire inopi, [2] ne pictus oberret
Cæruleâ in tabulâ. " [3] Sed cœnam funeris hæres
" Negliget iratus, quòd rem curtaveris: [4] urnæ
" Ossa inodora dabit; seu spirent cinnama surdum,
" Seu ceraso peccent casiæ, nescire paratus.
" Túne bona incolumis minuas?" sed Bestius urget
[5] Doctores Graios: [6] ita fit, postquam sapere urbi

Since they taught wisdom, who long taught to dance,
And to ape Reason, was a mode from France.
Then let us fearless look beyond the grave.
But you, strange heir, a word with you I crave.
[1] Suppose you claim, as mine, this mansion fair
Past to *heirs general*, or the Lord knows where.
I now would whisper. [2] In the glorious cause
Of Gallic freedom, and of Nature's laws,
[3] A junto firm, who well their lords obey,
Write of their [4] sure successes from Vendée:
The prompt Convention every line repeat.
Now sans-culottes in [5] Reason's temple meet.
Gay civic feasts with patriot kisses join;
For soon [6] we read of triumphs on the Rhine.

Cum pipere et palmis, venit nostrum hoc maris expers,
Fœnisecæ crasso vitiârunt unguine pultes.
Hæc cinere ulterior metuas? at tu [1] meus hæres,
Quisquis eris, paulùm à turbâ seductior, audi.
O bone, num ignoras? [2] missa est [3] à Cæsare laurus
Insignem ob [4] cladem Germanæ pubis, et [5] aris
Frigidus excutitur cinis: ac [6] jam postibus arma,

Of these the stage takes charge, and o'er the scene,
Ennobled generals stir the people's spleen.
Rank's ermined train in all their pride advance,
And [4] sovereigns arm'd the warlike pomp enhance.
But what are such when Liberty's alarm
Swells her loud voice, and lifts her thundering arm?
She proves her sons, as on this festal night,
Brightest in virtue, boldest in the fight.
Can any doubt of Gallic freedom's bliss?
But, not to keep you, what I mean is this.
[2] Whoe'er, of oratoric powers, command
The applause, in clubs, of the reforming band,
[3] Since the millenium seems no more remote,
[4] Shall, on my banker, have a general note—
I mean the needy. Heavens! how pale that face!
Nay, [5] storm not; I can fancy a worse case.

Jam [1] chlamydas regum, jam lutea gausapa captis,
Essedáque ingentésque locat Cæsonia Rhenos.
[2] Dis igitur, Genióque ducis centum paria, [3] ob res
Egregiè gestas, [4] induco: quis vetat? aude.
[5] Væ, nisi connives.

[1] Suppose I add the libellers to these.
" Good sir," you say—" reflect sir, if you please,
" Should you reduce me to your country seat,
" [2] Gravel, I own, is healthy, clean, and neat,
" Yet too much there, for such demands prevails;
" Which ask a fertile mould that never fails."
Though now it seem some pretext claims respect,
'Tis plain, whate'er I do, you will object.
Know then, had you and friends no legal right,
'Twould be my anxious business, day and night,
To use my power, and [3] a successor find,
As Prudence, or perhaps Caprice, inclined.
That will I now; [4] nor need I travel long
Ere shines some open aspect in the throng:

---

[1] oleum artrocreásque popello
Largior; an prohibes? dic claré. " Non adeò," inquis:
" [2] Exossatus ager juxtà est." Age, si mihi nulla
Jam reliqua ex amitis, patruelis nulla, proneptis
Nulla manet: patrui sterilis matertera vixit,
Déque aviâ nihilum superest: [3] accedo Bovillas
Clivùmque ad Virbî. [4] præstò est mihi

[1] Some petty freehold's lord shall boast a name
From royal licence, and be raised to fame.
How superciliously you note his birth!
But we are all inhabitants of earth.
[2] Look on our pedigree; how short appears
That string of ancestors your pride reveres;
And knew we more, [3] I possibly might see
This honest yeoman is allied to me.
Cousins of every kind I next should trace
To Adam, father of the human race.
[4] Our tie, you hold, is no conjecture vague:
Then why more plague me than even strangers plague?

---

[1] Manius hæres.
Progenies terræ? [2] quære ex me, quis mihi quartus
Sit pater, haud promptè, dicam tamen, adde etiam unum,
Unum etiam: terræ est jam filius: [3] et mihi ritu
Manius hic generis propè major avunculus exit.
[4] Qui prior es, cur me in decursu lampada poscis?

[1] By me, at least, you cannot fear to lose:
Take as you find me, or your chance refuse.
[2] The fortune I received, though render'd less,
You, by the laws of England, will possess:
And do you ask how much I mean to save
Of what a father, in his goodness, gave?
[3] Preach you retrenchment, in old-fashion'd strain,
And hope my capital may whole remain?
But Avarice works again: you sum the amount.
Presumptuous wretch! I'll settle this account.
Haste ye, my servants, [4] to the city fly;
Nor heed the price, but every dainty buy.

---

[1] Sum tibi Mercurius: venio Deus huc ego, ut ille
Pingitur; en renuis? vín' tu gaudere relictis?
[2] Deest aliquid summæ: minui mihi: sed tibi totum est,
Quicquid id est. ubi sit fuge quærere, quod mihi quondam
Legârat Tadius: [3] neu dicta repone paterna;
Fænoris accedat merces; hinc exime sumptus.
Quid reliquum est? reliquum? nunc, nunc, impensiùs unge,
[4] Unge, puer, caules. mihi festâ luce coquatur

Bear round my cards; for I am wiser grown
At length: I will, I will enjoy my own.
[1] Shall I abstain, that this low wretch, grown nice,
May seek the palm of fashionable vice?
May win new glory from successful bets,
In favours paid [2] some noble beauty's debts?
[3] Like a pale ghost, shall I appear; but he
Owe bloated looks to what he gains from me?
" Consult our interest," would he whisper still.
" Go, [4] sue for places you're unfit to fill.
" For these by turns give fiercest foes support.
" [5] Beset the minister, and ply the court,
" Scorn'd while you cringe; and wean'd from power
" your heart,
" Lose independence, its far nobler part."

Urtica, et fissâ fumosum sinciput aure,
Ut tuus iste nepos olim, satur anseris extis,
[1] Patriciæ immeiat vulvæ? [2] mihi trama figuræ
Sit reliqua: ast illi tremat omento popa venter?
" Vende animam lucro: [3] mercare; atq; [4] excute solers
" Omne latus mundi, ne sit præstantior alter

What must I? [1] 'tis resolved; no more I blame.
You have me, humble, as befits, and tame.
One annual thousand, with all profits clear,
Ushers the thriving pensioner's career.
Now four are added. [2] When content you'll tell.
Behold six more, and own 'twas managed well.
Still silent? now six more my arts obtain.
Not yet enough!—To slave for you is vain.
[3] Who to the limits of desires could reach,
Lax, as the logic of [4] a patriot's [5] speech?

" Cappadocas rigidâ pingues plausisse catastâ.
" Rem duplica." [1] Feci; jam triplex, jam mihi quartò,
Jam decies redit in rugam. [2] depunge, ubi sistam,
[3] Inventus, [4] Chrysippe, tui finitor [5] acervi.

ART OF ENGLISH POETRY:

BEING AN

IMITATION, WITH NOTES,

OF

HORACE'S EPISTLE TO THE PISOS.

Τον φθόνον ὠ Πολλων ποδὶ τ' ηλασεν, ὡδε τ' ειπεν.
Ασσυριε ποίαμοῖο μεγας ῥοος, αλλα τα πολλα
Λυμαῖα γῆς καὶ πολλον ἐφ' ὑδαὶι συρφέϊον ελκει.
Δηοῖ δ' εκ απο πανῖϑ· ὑδωρ φορεῦσι Μελισσαι,
Αλλ' ἥϊς καθαρη τε καὶ ακραανῖϑ· ανερπει
Πιδακϑ· εξ ἱερῆς ολιγη λιβάς, ακρον ἀωῖον.

CALLIMACHUS. HYMN. AD APOLL.

Fierce with his foot indignant Phœbus spurn'd
The invidious monster, and in wrath return'd;
" Wide rolls Euphrates' wave, but soil'd with mud,
" And dust and slime pollute the swelling flood:
" For Ceres still the fair Melissæ bring
" The purest water from the smallest spring,
" That, softly murmuring, creeps along the plain,
" And falls with gentle cadence, to the main." TYTLER.

TO THE

RIGHT REVEREND

RICHARD HURD,

LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

MY LORD,

As the nature of a work illustrative of the same poem as many of those criticisms by which you have conferred a benefit on English literature, points you out particularly as the person to whom I should properly show respect by the Dedication of it; I am induced to act upon a presumption, that your objections to it may not be insuperable. Had I wanted this excuse, I should have been differently influenced by the knowledge I had, in common with the rest of the world, that your usual studies and occupations had ceased to be congenial with it; and that, besides, this is the result of those pious and

conscientious motives of conduct, which ought, beyond all others, to be held sacred.

I will not, therefore, launch into a comparison of your successful literary labours with those of the great writers of antiquity; nor enlarge upon the fact, that as the elegant Fenelon, of rank similar to yours, trod once with credit to himself and his country, in the steps of Homer, you are as worthily eminent among the active part of society, by pursuing the path in which you were preceded by Aristotle.

I would, my Lord, by no means lay an inferior stress on merits, which you consider of so much greater consequence. An ancestor of mine affirms, in a letter, which is printed, to Archbishop Tillotson, that "it was an opinion of his moderation, simplicity, and integrity, rather than his parts or post, that always made him set a value upon his friendship, of which, perhaps, he was a better judge, leaving the latter to men

of deeper talents." I shall express a similar sentiment, in saying, that my prepossession in favour of your former pursuits does not prevent my chiefly admiring in you, those virtues, and that truly useful part of character, which, as they are beyond any thing becoming in every station, so are they particularly suited to the important one you hold.

The venerable body to which you belong may be considered in the light, either of a band of censors, whose existence, as a separate order in the state, is honourable to the constitution, by shewing its marked respect for morality; or of a collection of persons interested to represent the *virtue*, as others represent the *property* of the country, in parliament; or lastly, and principally, of public monitors, piously provided to direct the wandering thoughts of men to the mysterious Cause of all. An institution that can at once seem valuable on moral, political,

and religious accounts, must truly need every effort directed to the preservation of its original and natural advantages.

That there is no one more formed than your Lordship to adorn and to uphold it, by his qualities and character, is the sincere opinion of,

My Lord,

with high esteem,

your most obedient

humble Servant,

Spring Gardens,
Feb. 28, 1798.

JOHN PENN.

THE

ART OF ENGLISH POETRY

ADDRESSED TO THE

LIVING POETS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN.

THE

ART OF ENGLISH POETRY.

If Whim our wildest artist led,
For once, to paint a human head
Join'd to a horse's neck; and shew,
In various colours clad below,
Limbs hardly Fancy could avail
To couple; in a fish's tail
The monster ending, that with grace
Above adorn'd a woman's face;
' Would you not, wondering at his style,
Who pleased us in the nightmare, smile?

EPISTOLA AD PISONES.

Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam
Jungere si velit, et varias inducere plumas
Undique collectis membris, ut turpiter atrem
Desinat in piscem mulier formosa supernè
' Spectatum admissi, risum teneatis amici?

Own,[2] bards, that such a picture seems
Scarce stranger, than a book, like dreams
That scare the sick, with fancies fraught
Betraying no consistent thought;
In which the whole is void of art,
And neither head nor tail a part.
Taste does not coldly, nor e'er did,
Inventions somewhat bold forbid;
The poet's and the painter's tribe
Both wont with freedom to describe.
We know, and mutually, 'tis true,
Demand and make the allowance due:
But fury never let us find
In mildness: to each other kind

Credite,[1] Pisones, istæ tabulæ fore librum
Persimilem, cujus, velut ægri somnia, vanæ
Fingentur species, ut nec pes, nec caput uni
Reddatur formæ. Pictoribus atque poetis
Quidlibet audendi semper fuit æqua potestas;
Scimus, et hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim:
Sed non ut placidis coëant immitia, non ut

Nor birds and serpents let us see,
Nor tigers bid with lambs agree.
On labours oft, that boast pretence
Of plan to higher consequence,
Some splendid purple patches sewn,
The attention will arrest alone.
[1] With groves at large described, we meet
Round veil'd[2] Religion's chaste retreat;
Or happy language shews, confined
By verdant banks, enchanting, [3] wind
[4] The clear Garonne, where mountains range;
[5] And tints of air the landscape change.
Your power confess'd is out of place;
For why an [6] oak tree would you trace,

Serpentes avibus geminentur, tigribus agni.
Inceptis gravibus plerumque, et magna professis
Purpureus latè qui splendeat unus et alter
Assuitur pannus; cùm [1] lucus et ara [2] Dianæ,
[3] Et properantis aquæ per amœnos ambitus agros,
[4] Aut flumen Rhenum, aut pluvius describitur [5] arcus.
Sed nunc non erat his locus; et fortasse [6] cupressum

Employ'd on canvas to express
The shipwreck'd mariner's distress?
Your art a vase was to reveal;
Why comes a pitcher from the wheel?
Then still let Unity attract
The mind, nor Beauty's self distract.
  Most of us, ' friends of every age,
(For none forswears the noble rage)
Some excellence pursuing, fail.
I wish conciseness to prevail
In what I write, and grow obscure;
Of praise for sweetness too secure,
One flows inanimately soft;
The aspiring strain is turgid oft:

Scis simulare; quid hoc, si fractis enatat exspes
Navibus, ære dato qui pingitur? amphora cœpit
Institui, currente rotâ cur urceus exit?
Denique sit quidvis simplex duntaxat et unum.
  Maxima pars vatum ' pater et juvenes patre digni,
Decipimur specie recti. Brevis esse laboro,
Obscurus fio: sectantem lævia nervi
Deficiunt animique; professus grandia turget:

One, startled at the whirlwind's sound,
Stoops low, and creeps along the ground.
He who, from timid Caution free,
Too much affects variety,
Will dolphins in a wood display,
And make a boar through ocean stray.
Contempt of a defect may move
To err, if Judgment faulty prove.
[1] A sculptor, sought o'er all the space
Of suburbs, beyond Portland-Place,
May well be found, with happy care
Who imitates the nails, or hair;
Yet hopes in vain to form a whole,
And breathe into the bronze a soul.

Serpit humi tutus nimium timidusque procellæ.
Qui variare cupit rem prodigaliter unam
Delphinum sylvis appingit, fluctibus aprum.
In vitium ducit culpæ fuga, si caret arte.
[1] Æmilium circa ludum faber imus et ungues
Exprimet, et molles imitabitur ære capillos,
Infelix operis summâ, quia ponere totum
Nesciet; hunc ego me, si quid componere curem,

But his perfections I should judge
As foolish enviously to grudge.
Were it my office to compose,
As wish to have a hideous nose,
So I were flatter'd for an eye,
Or famous locks, of darkest die.
Choose we, who public favour court,
Those subjects we can well support;
And often pausing, find at length
What burden would befit our strength,
What weight our shoulders would refuse.
He who his theme can ably choose,
With fluent eloquence unites
Each charm of order, as he writes.

Non magis esse velim, quam pravo vivere naso,
Spectandum nigris occulis, nigroque capillo.
Sumite materiem vestris, qui scribitis, æquam
Viribus; et versate diu; quid ferre recusent,
Quid valeant humeri. Cui lecta potenter erit res,
Nec facundia deseret hunc, nec lucidus ordo.

In this appears that order's force,
I deem, to which he has recourse,
That sometimes, unrestrain'd, he say
What Fancy dictates; but delay
As often much it may suggest,
That uselessly were yet express'd.
Careful new terms, your powers command,
To scatter with a sparing hand,
You wisely might your views confine
Well known expressions so to join,
That they with novelty might please:
Yet if you would unfold with ease
Knowledge, that to our stores could add
[1] Philosophy, or good, or bad;

Ordinis hæc Virtus erit et Venus, aut ego fallor,
Ut jamnunc dicat, jamnunc debentia dici,
Pleraque differat, et præsens in tempus omittat,
Hoc amet, hoc spernat, promissi carminis auctor.
In verbis etiam tenuis, cautusque serendis,
Dixeris egregiè, notum si callida verbum
Reddiderit junctura novum: si fortè necesse est
Indiciis monstrare recentibus [1] abdita rerum,

Then frame, with Fancy's lawful aid,
Terms of such texture, as had made
Old [1] Hastings, with his formal air,
[2] Dancing in satin doublet, stare.
Nor will you from right reason swerve,
If, ever cautious, you preserve
The clear and simple style of Greece.
Should rules, from which you would release
[3] Shakspeare and [4] Dryden, starchly sway
The school of [5] Mason and of [6] Gray?
Why am I grudged the sober use
Of aught I venture to produce,
When [7] Temple's, and when [8] Milton's phrase
So mix'd a character displays;

Fingere [1] cinctutis non exaudita [2] Cethegis
Continget, dabiturque licentia sumpta pudenter.
Et nova factaque nuper habebunt verba fidem, si
Græco fonte cadant, parcè detorta. Quid autem?
[3] Cæcilio, [4] Plautoque dabit Romanus, ademptum
[5] Virgilio, [6] Varioque? Ego cur acquirere pauca,
Si possim, invideor, cum lingua [7] Catonis et [8] Ennî

And what was written thus, or sung,
So much enrich'd our native tongue?
We look in course for, from the mint,
[1] New money, if it but imprint
The features of the [2] reigning king.
As change the autumnal tempests bring
To groves, and scatter on the ground
Old leaves, that new may rise around;
So words pass off that once had grace,
And others flourish in their place.
Our labours, and ourselves as they,
Alike are subject to decay.
[3] Whether, connecting coast with coast,
(A [4] British king's and people's boast)

Sermonem patriam ditaverit, et novum rerum
Nomina protulerit? Licuit, semperque licebit
[1] Signatum [2] præsente notâ procudere nummum.
Ut sylvis folia pronos mutantur in annos;
Prima cadunt: ita verborum vetus interit ætas,
Et juvenum ritu florent modo nata vigentque.
Debemur morti nos, nostraque; [3] sive receptus
Terrâ Neptunus classes Aquilonibus arcet,
[4] Regis opus; sterilisve palus prius aptaque remis

The navigable wave is led
Through towns; or marshes, late o'erspread
With putrid pools, and useless, now
Productive made, admit the plough:
Or streams, from culture that surrounds
Diverted, flow in certain bounds;
All earthly things must have an end,
Nor only language can contend
With Fate. Words may, however old,
Revive; as many that unfold
Our daily thoughts, not long remain,
If powerful Custom so ordain,
Call'd to prescribe the bounds, and teach
The universal rules of speech.

Vicinas urbes alit, et grave sentit aratum:
Seu cursum mutavit iniquum frugibus amnis,
Doctus iter melius: mortalia cuncta peribunt,
Necdum sermonum stet honos, et gratia vivax.
Multa renascentur, quæ jam cecidere; cadentque
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula; si volet usus,
Quem penès arbitrium est, et jus, et norma loquendi.

What measure the relation needs,
[1] Of heaven's, or earth's heroic deeds
Milton points out, unless I err;
Though some a different verse prefer.
But judges do not disagree
On that which sooths in Elegy.
[2] A stanza that four equal lines,
Framed of five feet, distinctly joins,
With rhymes alternate, pleases most.
Critics that would its fitness boast
For other strains, through the repute
Of bards [3] relinquish'd their dispute.
[4] Pope well, for satire, Spleen alarm'd
With his [4] own iron couplets arm'd;

Res gestæ [1] regumque ducumque, et tristia bella
Quo scribi possent numero, monstravit Homerus.
[2] Versibus impariter junctis querimonia primùm,
Post etiam inclusa est voti sententia compos,
Quis tamen exiguos elegos emiserit auctor,
Grammatici certant, et adhuc [3] sub judice lis est.
[4] Archilochum [5] proprio rabies armavit Iambo.

[6] Which verse the drama chose to quit,
Experience proving 'twas unfit
To enforce belief of feign'd distress;
And still to copy manners less,
That, all their nicer grace to save,
Exactest imitation crave.
To sing of peaceful deeds, or one
In battle brave as [2] Ammon's son;
Or, to the skies, in lasting lays,
The Passions, Virtues, Arts, to raise;
[3] Or joys with which the bosom glow'd
Of frolic Youth, has waked the Ode.
Why, if I fail to keep apart
The styles peculiar to each art,

---

[1] Hunc socci cepere pedem, grandesque cothurni,
Alternis aptum sermonibus, et populares
Vincentem strepitus et natum rebus agendis.
Musa dedit fidibus divos [2] puerosque deorum,
Et pugilem victorem, et equum certamine primum
[3] Et juvenum curas, et libera vina referre.
Descriptas servare vices, operumque colores,

Grace foreign to the work my aim,
A poet's honour do I claim?
Why scorn, the silly title sought
Of genius, knowledge, if untaught?
[1] No genuine comic bard would choose
The cumbrous clog of verse to use:
Nor would he write with tragic force,
Who, in the language of discourse,
Guilt's dread by shadowy shapes increased,
Display'd [2] Macbeth's terrific feast.
Styles Nature ne'er together link'd
Eternally be kept distinct!
Yet 'tis in Comedy no fault,
If even her voice she should exalt;

Cur ego, si nequeo ignoroque, poeta salutor?
Cur nescire, pudens prave, quam discere malo?
[1] Versibus exponi tragicis res comica non vult.
Indignatur item privatis et prope socco
Dignis carminibus narrari [2] cœna Thyestæ.
Singula quæque locum teneant sortita decenter.
Interdum tamen et vocem Comœdia tollit,

And, with genteel vexation warm,
[1] Lord Townly is still heard to storm.
Nor always Tragedy alike
With swelling diction seeks to strike:
[2] Wolsey and [3] Buckingham, now lost
Their hopes, and proud ambition cross'd,
Must simply give their feelings vent,
[4] To drop the minister content,
If to claim pity they presume,
Or fix attention on their doom.
Works should not only strike, but please,
Conducted with all Nature's ease;
And without violence, where'er
They choose, the willing reader bear.

Iratusque [1] Chremes tumido delitigat ore;
Et tragicus plerumque dolet sermone pedestri.
[2] Telephus aut [3] Peleus, cum pauper et exul uterque
[4] Projicit ampullas, et sesquipedalia verba,
Si curat cor spectantis tetigisse loquelâ.
Non satis est pulchra esse poëmata; dulcia sunto,
Et quocunque volent, animum auditoris agunto.

Sad as their spirits we perceive
The countenance of those who grieve;
Nor speaking thoughtlessly, will he
Who suffers, pity raise in me.
Wolsey and Buckingham, a flow
Of words unapt in scenes of woe
Would tempt me, not with you to weep,
But either laugh or fall asleep.
The man in sorrow his regret
Will utter, and the angry threat:
The language of the gay, 'tis clear,
Is sportive; grave, of the severe.
The tongue invariably relates
The person's feelings, and his fates:

Ut ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adflent
Humani vultus; si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi; tunc tua me infortunia lædent.
Telephe vel Peleu, male si mandata loqueris,
Aut dormitabo, aut ridebo: tristia mœstum
Vultum verba decent; iratum, plena minarum;
Ludentem, lasciva; severum, seria dictu.

And he who, writing for the stage,
The attention will with scraps engage
Of eloquence, and nothing more,
[1] Will set an audience in a roar.
Let different styles some [2] king of old
Distinguish from his [3] barons bold;
Gray-headed Age, of judgment cool,
From Youth that boisterous passions rule;
[4] The seemly matron, raised by birth,
From [5] the low nurse of vulgar mirth;
The merchant, ever used to roam,
From him who tills his fields at home;

Format enim natura prius nos intus ad omnem
Fortunarum habitum; juvat, aut impellit ad iram,
Aut ad humum mœrore gravi deducit, et angit:
Post effert animi motus interprete linguâ.
Si dicentis erunt fortunis absona dicta,
Romani tollent [1] equites, peditesque cachinnum.
Intererit multum, [2] Divusne loquatur an [3] heros;
Maturusne senex, an adhuc florente juventâ
Fervidus; an [4] matrona potens, an [5] sedula nutrix;
Mercatorne vagus, cultorne virentis agelli;

And where the character is born
In [1] Europe, or in [2] Asia, warn.
Be still consistent, whether you
Old fables choose, or fancy new.
If [3] Shakspeare's [4] Richard you revive,
[5] Shew him surpassing all alive
In dark hypocrisy and guile,
Cruel, and spite of Valour, vile.
[6] Shew Alexander bent to reign
O'er all things, generous, brave, and vain;
[7] Cato, in danger and distress
More glorious than his foe's success;
[8] The queen of Egypt, true to Love,
And, in deliberate death, above

---

[1] Colchus, an Assyrius; [2] Thebis nutritus, an Argis,
Aut famam sequere, aut convenientia finge
Scriptor. [3] Homeræum si forte reponis [4] Achillem,
[5] Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer;
Jura neget sibi nata, nihil non arroget armis.
[6] Sit Medea ferox invictaque, [7] flebilis Ino,
[8] Perfidus Ixion,

The counsels weak of female fear;
[1] Brutus disposed, alone sincere,
To free (from power the usurper hurl'd)
A land; [2] Caractacus, a world.
But if that enterprize be meant
Of utmost daring, to invent,
The creature of your fancy make
Throughout the same; nor let him take
A stamp that would have shewn the man
Far different, when the play began.
Yet still the enterprize is hard;
[3] And you would be a doughtier bard,
Would more encounter risk to fail,
From your own head to form a tale,

---

[1] Io vaga, tristis [2] Orestes.
Si quid inexpertum scenæ committis, et audes
Personam formare novam; servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.
Difficile est propriè communia dicere; tuque
[3] Rectius Iliacum carmen deducis in actus,
Quam si proferres ignota indictaque primus.

Than duly on the stage to bring
The history of an English king.
To ancient stories you, in short,
Have every licence to resort,
If neither, wanting native nerve,
Constrain'd, the order you preserve
Of some known poem; nor each word
Translate, a servile part preferr'd;
Nor are entangled in the course
Of Imitation's task perforce,
That bids you to your work transfer
Such thoughts as would not else occur,
And as, though forced upon you, seem
Yet foreign to the general theme.
Nor, like a ballad, e'er begin
Your work, that with vexatious din,

Publica materies privati juris erit, si
Non circa vilem, patulumque moraberis orbem;
Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere, fidus
Interpres; nec desilies imitator in arctum,
Unde pedem proferre pudor vetat, aut operis lex.
Nec sic incipies, ut scriptor cyclicus olim:

By some old woman in our ear
Still sounded, summons[1] *all to hear.*
To what a strait a bard were driven
The promise to perform so given!
The labouring mountain teems, no doubt;
Yet nothing but a mouse creeps out.
From such how different seems the song
Of him who is so seldom wrong.
With plainness he, that judgment seeks,
[2] *Of man's first disobedience* speaks.
He fire from smoke, not smoke from fire,
Calls forth, preparing us to admire

---

[1] *Fortunam Priami cantabo et nobile bellum.*
Quid dignum tanto feret hic promissor hiatu?
Parturiunt montes: nascetur ridiculus mus.
Quanto rectius hic, qui nil molitur inepte!

[2] *Dic mihi Musa, virum, captæ post mœnia Trojæ*
Qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes.
Non fumum ex fulgore, sed ex fumo dare lucem
Cogitat, ut speciosa dehinc miracula promat,

[1] Fair Eden's groves, for ever green,
[2] Hell, [3] Chaos, and [4] Creation's scene.
[5] Nor did he wish, in Alfred's praise,
One work to reach from Egbert's days;
[6] Nor had with Uther's acts begun
To celebrate his far-famed son.
Still the main subject kept in view,
The hearer he, as if he knew
Whate'er preceded, while he sings,
Transports into the midst of things;
And slight events, appearing such
As could not please, forbears to touch.
While Truth and Fancy he combines,
So the well order'd poem shines,

---

[1] Antiphaten, [2] Scyllamque, et cum [3] Cyclope [4] Charybdin.
[5] Nec reditum Diomedis ab interitu Meleagri,
[6] Nec gemino bellum Trojanum orditur ab ovo:
Semper ad eventum festinat, et in medias res,
Non secus ac notas, auditorem rapit; et quæ
Desperat tractata nitescere posse, relinquit:
Atque ita mentitur, sic veris falsa remiscet,

We find beginning, middle, end,
All to the selfsame purpose tend.
Learn what, as your allotted task,
The public, as myself, will ask,
[1] Would you the lounger, at your play,
[2] Quite to the curtain's fall delay,
[3] One actor seen, with archer glance,
To speak the epilogue advance.
Observant of all round you, scan
The manners of each age in man.
The boy seeks playmates of like years;
Pettish, yet placable appears.

Primo ne medium, medio ne discrepet imum.
Tu, quid ego et populus mecum desideret, audi;
[1] Si fautoris eges [2] aulæa manentis, et [3] usque
Sessuri, donec cantor, vos plaudite, dicat:
Ætatis cujusque notandi sunt tibi mores,
Mobilibusque decor naturis dandus et annis.
Reddere qui voces jam scit puer, et pede certo
Signat humum; gestit paribus colludere, et iram
Colligit, ac ponit temerè, et mutatur in horas.

The youth, from tutors hardly free,
Of hounds and horses fond we see,
Or, wilder daily, in renown
For every folly of the town;
Rejecting formal, dull Advice;
Lost all he borrows in a trice;
Presumptuous, eager, and by fits
Desiring what, enjoy'd, he quits.
To one, by time more steady grown,
The value well of things is known;
He makes great friends, and only dreams
Of Interest's, and Ambition's schemes.

Imberbis juvenis, tandem custode remoto,
Gaudet equis canibusque, et aprici gramine campi:
Cereus in vitium flecti; monitoribus asper,
Utilium tardus provisor, prodigus æris,
Sublimis, cupidusque, et amata relinquere pernix.
Conversis studiis, ætas animusque virilis
Quærit opes et amicitias, inservit honori;
Commisisse cavet, quod mox mutare laboret.

Old men shew either a desire
As much to hoard as to acquire,
Or weakness, in a pausing will,
And constant fear of fancied ill:
Peevish and plaintive, loud in praise
Of past, and blame of present days.
Each age of blessings is possess'd,
Peculiar, and denied the rest:
You then in fiction would do wrong
O'erlooking what to one belong.
The audience either learn from one
Who speaks, or witness what is done.

Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda; vel quod
Quærit, et inventis miser abstinet, ac timet uti;
Vel quod res omnes timidè gelidèque ministrat,
Dilator, spe lentus, iners, pavidusque futuri;
Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti
Se puero, censor, castigatorque minorum.
Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum,
Multa recedentes adimunt; ne forte seniles
Mandentur juveni partes, pueroque viriles.
Semper in adjunctis ævoque morabimur aptis.
Aut agitur res in scenis, aut acta refertur:

Far feebler the effect we find,
Of what we hear upon our mind,
Than what we suddenly espy
Presented to the faithful eye,
And judge of by ourselves alone.
Yet things, improper to be shewn
By their own nature, were conceal'd
Discreetly first, and then reveal'd
In such narrations as suffice,
[1] More eloquent, as more concise.
[2] Let not just Cato, harshly fierce,
Himself before his daughters pierce;
[3] Nor aim the drunken grooms to bring,
Blood-stain'd, in view, with Scotland's king.

Segnior irritant animos demissa per aurem,
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quæ
Ipse sibi tradit spectator. Non tamen intus
Digna geri promes in scenam: multaque tolles
Ex oculis, quæ mox narret [1] facundia præsens:
[2] Ne pueros coram populo Media trucidet;
[3] Aut humana palam coquat exta nefarius Atreus;

[1] Not Witchcraft's bard had made one steed
Of Duncan on another feed
Before us; [2] nor the example gives
Of Beldams sailing in their sieves.
Unlikely, fruitless fictions must,
Save in uncommon strains, disgust.
[3] Five acts did Taste of old decree
To plays; yet well now sanctions three.
[4] To call imp, sprite, to aid your plot
And cut the fable's gordian knot
Less suits the serious writer's task
Than the wild whimsies of the mask.
In neither, should a cumbrous crowd
Of needless speakers be allow'd.

---

[1] Aut in avem Procne vertatur, [2] Cadmus in anguem.
Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi.
[3] Neve minor, neu sit quinto productior actu
Fabula, quæ posci vult, et spectata reponi.
[4] Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus
[6] Inciderit; nec quarta loqui persona laboret.

[1] Though no religious laws ordain
A Chorus, poets to restrain,
Our subject suiting, we may choose
The art's united aid to use,
And waken Music, to increase
Twofold the importance of the piece.
A chorus, [2] mindful of its end,
Still to its office may attend;
[3] May favouring prompt, with counsels sage,
The good; may check the oppressor's rage;
Love those the fear of guilt alarms;
Praise Temperance, Justice, and the charms
Of Peace; or, witnesses of all
That passes, unknown blessings call

---

[1] Actoris partes chorus, officiumque virile
Defendat: [2] neu quid medios intercinat actus,
Quod non proposito conducat, et hæreat aptè,
[3] Ille bonis faveatque, et concilietur amicis,
Et regat iratos, et amet peccare timentes:
Ille dapes laudet mensæ brevis, ille salubrem
Justitiam, legesque, et apertis otia portis;

From Heaven on the afflicted down;
And on the proud bid Fortune frown.
[1] No band endued with power to thrill,
[2] And rival Tragedy in skill,
Trailing with pomp her regal robe,
Composed the orchestra of the Globe.
[3] More simple sounds by those beneath
From the balcony heard to breathe,
Sufficed an audience to delight,
Plain, sober, frugal, on the sight
Intent, as o'er a pit all stood
[4] In theatres, half-fill'd, of wood.
[5] But when the city, spreading round,
New limits now began to bound,

Ille tegat commissa, deosque precetur et oret,
Ut redeat miseris, abeat fortuna superbis.

[1] Tibia non, ut nunc, orichalco juncta, [2] tubæque
Æmula; sed tenuis, [3] simplexque foramine pauco
Aspirare et adesse choris erat utilis, atque
[4] Nondum spissa nimis complere sedilia flatu;
Quo sane populus numerabilis, utpote parvus
Et frugi castusque verecundusque coibat.
[5] Postquam cœpit agros extendere victor, et urbem
Laxior amplecti murus

And [1] growing Luxury display'd
The triumphs of unrivall'd trade,
[2] The various instruments combined
To allure, that rouze the ravish'd mind.
[3] More welcome, as Refinement more
Prevail'd, or Knowledge hid before,
Musicians swarm'd from every land;
Nor fill'd, between the acts, the band
Their tedious intervals alone,
But [4] graced with many a helpful tone,
The voice of actors on the stage,
Deck'd in the dress of every age.

---

[1] vinoque diurno
Placari genius fessis impune diebus,
[2] Accessit numerisque modisque licentia major.
[3] Indoctus quid enim saperet liberque laborum
Rusticus urbano confusus, turpis honesto?
Sic priscæ motumque et luxuriam addidit arti
Tibicen, [4] traxitque vagus per pulpita vestem:
[5] Sic etiam fidibus voces crevere severis,
Et tulit eloquium insolitum facundia præceps;
Utiliumque sagax rerum, et divina futuri,

[1] Thence sure a choir employ'd to teach
Virtue, might ancient Reverence reach,
[2] If those at Westminster so well
Could of celestial glories tell
In hymns; accordant notes the while
Re-echoing through the solemn pile.
He who first sought, in times remote,
The tragic victor's prize, a goat,
Brought on his stage the Satyrs rude,
Provoking smiles in gamesome mood,
Though oft the motley piece was fraught
With serious and impassion'd thought.
Our country we may well believe,
Would not less willingly receive
Such customs, holding all allow'd
Its bards, that gratifies the crowd.

---

[1] Sortilegis non discrepuit sententia Delphis.
Carmine qui tragico vilem certavit ob hircum,
Mox etiam agrestes Satyros nudavit, et asper
Incolumi gravitate jocum tentavit, eo quod
Illecebris erat et gratâ novitate morandus
Spectator, functusque sacris, et potus, et exlex.

[1] But should Reflection timely move
The sober critic to approve,
Chancing such mingled works to see,
The parts would so be found to agree,
And mirth connection so disclose
With gravity, and verse with prose,
That neither king nor prince who speaks
And dresses nobly, when he seeks
Some humble mansion, should debase
With jests too coarse his royal race,
Nor, his familiar manners shewn,
Be scarce again as mortal known.
[2] No vice of Tragedy is worse
Than language mean, in prose or verse:

---

[1] Verum ita risores, ita commendare dicaces
Conveniet Satyros, ita vertere seria ludo;
Ne quicunque Deus, quicunque adhibebitur heros,
Regali conspectus in auro nuper et ostro,
Migret in obscuras humili sermone tabernas:
Aut, dum vitat humum, nubes et inania captat.
[2] Effutire leves indigna tragœdia versus;

[1] As coy reserve the modest maid
Shews in the sportive masquerade;
[2] So conscious dignity is seen
Though boors jest round her, in her mien.
[3] I would not, [4] though two styles I mix,
Dramatic bards, on language fix
Too common, nor my end but half
Attain, content to raise a laugh;
So that no difference be made,
By nice discriminating shade
Of character, between the address
Of [5] Francis, or [6] when beadles press,
[7] Bold Dorothy, and [8] Henry, known
[9] As heir apparent to the throne.

---

[1] Ut festis matrona moveri jussa diebus,
[2] Intererit Satyris paulum pudibunda protervis.
[3] Non ego inornata et dominantia nomina solum,
Verbaque, Pisones, [4] Satyrorum scriptor, amabo:
Nec sic enitar tragico differre colori,
Ut nihil intersit [5] Davusne loquatur, [6] et audax
Pythias, [7] emuncto lucrata Simone talentum,
An [8] custos famulusque Dei [9] Silenus alumni.

[1] If awe of rule the spirit damp
Of poets, and their genius cramp;
Following the example which our stage
Has furnish'd in a former age,
Even they could such productions boast,
[2] As bards, by Science prompted most,
Might strive to equal, and yet fail:
So much does inborn art avail!
[3] So much may works, howe'er attack'd
By Taste as barbarous, attract!
[4] Their language should distinguish clowns
From those of lofty birth in towns.
Such, nor does midnight courtship suit,
[5] Nor love-songs warbled to the lute;

---

[1] Ex noto fictum carmen sequar: ut sibi quivis
Speret idem; sudet multum, frustraque laboret
Ausus idem: [2] tantum series juncturaque pollet;
[3] Tantum de medio sumptis accedit honoris.
[4] Sylvis deducti caveant, me judice, Fauni,
Ne velut innati triviis, ac pene forenses,
[5] Aut nimium teneris juvenentur versibus unquam,

[1] Yet with low ribaldry to excite
A roar of laughter, marks not quite
The bard, less diligent [2] a pack
Of bawlers, as their nuts they crack
O'er the wide gallery, to please,
[3] Than minds, true merit taught to seize.
Yet, rather than suppose that art
Gives not a grace to every part,
Learn, that Correctness should adorn
Even metre, nor can merit scorn.
Two syllables, the short first put,
Unite in the Iambic foot
(Long thus entitled) which, too oft
Repeated, though its flow is soft,

---

[1] Aut immunda crepent ignominiosaque dicta.
Offenduntur enim, quibus est equus, et pater et res;
Nec, si quid [2] fricti ciceris probat et nucis emptor,
[3] Æquis accipiunt animis, donantve coronâ.

[4] Syllaba longa brevi subjecta, vocatur Iambus,
Pes citus: unde etiam trimetris accrescere jussit
Nomen Iambeis, cum senos redderit ictus

Gives rhyme an ill effect, a worse,
As these unaided, to blank verse.
[1] But justly modulated lines
Our drama to five feet confines,
Though adding sometimes at their close
A syllable; and less in those
Will hardly possible admit,
When finish'd tragedy is writ.
[2] Shakspeare's and [3] Otway's fluent strains,
Which mark the poet without pains
Composing, yet have less to mourn
(Their early rudeness better born)

Primus ad extremum similis sibi; non ita pridem,
[1] Tardior ut paulo graviorque veniret ad aures,
Spondeos stabiles in jura paterna recepit
Commodus et patiens: non ut de sede secundâ
Cederet, aut quartâ socialiter. Hic et in [2] Accî
Nobilibus trimetris apparet rarus, et [3] Ennî.
In scenam missus magno cum pondere versus,

Than such as in this age, through [1] haste,
Are tuneless, or through [2] biass'd taste.
[3] Perhaps the many do not see
What works with critic rules agree;
[4] And hence, accustom'd to escape
Wide censure, British writers shape
Their course at will; nor bound by one,
Esteem such lifeless laws as none.
What then am I to do? Compose
Still incorrectly? Or suppose
That all with scrutinizing look
Must scan my work, and every book;
And lose that freedom which exalts
The style, to be exempt from faults?

---

[1] Aut operæ celeris nimium, curaque carentis
Aut [2] ignoratæ premit artis crimine turpi.
[3] Non quivis videt immodulata poemata judex;
[4] Et data Romanis venia est indigna poetis,
Idcircone vager, scribamque licenter? ut omnes
Visuros peccata putem mea; tutus et intra
Spem veniæ cautus? Vitavi denique culpam,

[1] Here you may justly, o'er and o'er,
Critics, extol that classic lore
The country estimates aright,
Its youth enjoining day and night,
To meditate the labours chaste
Of Greece, aud those of rival taste.
[2] Beaumont and Fletcher, with their strokes
Of shameless mirth, and wanton jokes,
[3] The taste of your forefathers hit,
Though deem'd to live in days of wit;
Reflection all of us may move
Their judgment now to disapprove,
If simply we the means possess
Just humour, in its native dress,
Stripp'd of obscenity, to know,
[4] Or scenes that life's full image show.

Non laudem merui. [1] Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturnâ versate manu, versate diurnâ.
At vestri proavi [2] Plautinos et numeros, et
[3] Laudavere sales? nimium patienter utrumque
(Ne dicam stultè) mirati: si modo ego et vos
Scimus inurbanum lepido seponere dicto,
[4] Legitimumque sonum digito callemus et aure.

A mimic song, 'tis said, at first,
Was Tragedy, by those dispersed
Around the hamlets heard, where'er
The inventor Thespis chose to bear
His company; who shew'd their art,
Their faces smearing, from his cart.
Next Eschylus the robe and mask,
Which Decency[1] then seem'd to ask,
Added not only; but, a stage
Constructing, fix'd as any age
Has since beheld, the actor raised
On lofty buskins; and amazed
His audience, from the exalted floor,
With his bold strains, unmatch'd before.

Ignotum Tragicæ genus invenisse Camœnæ
Dicitur, et plaustris vexisse poemata Thespis
Quæ canerent, agerentque, peruncti fæcibus ora,
Post hunc personæ pallæque repertor[1] honestæ
Eschylus et modicis instravit pulpita tignis,
Et docuit magnumque loqui, nitique cothurno.

The ancient Comedy appear'd
Ere long, and flourish'd; nor was fear'd
Its power, in future, to amuse:
But this too ready to abuse,
And grown too scurrilous in mirth,
Few years did it survive its birth;
A chorus, little proved in awe
Of decency, forbid by law.
[1] Our writers yet with those most famed
For various merit may be named:
[2] Nor is the credit trifling, due
To such as cared not to pursue
The path our neighbours did, and seek
[3] Tales chiefly they had read in Greek;

Successit vetus his Comœdia, non sine multâ
Laude: sed in vitium libertas excidit, et vim
Dignam lege regi: lex est accepta; Chorusque
Turpiter obticuit, sublato jure nocendi.
[1] Nil intentatum nostri liquere poetæ:
[2] Nec minimum meruere decus, [3] vestigia Græca
Ausi deserere, et celebrare

But [4] whether gaily, in a coat
Of modern cut, or times remote
Portray'd, and [5] dress of formal kind,
[6] Domestic characters design'd.
[1] And even more praise in arts than arms,
Which have for wisdom fewer charms,
Had honour'd [2] either British Isle,
Had not the labour of the file
Affrighted poets, while [3] their race
The laws of writing *did transgress.*
[4] But you, that to my strain attend,
O hear the counsel of a friend,
Which warns you less that work to esteem,
In which the author did not seem

---

[4] domestica facta,
[5] Vel qui Prætextas, [6] vel qui docuere Togatas.
[1] Nec virtute foret clarisve potentius armis,
Quam linguâ, [2] Latium; si non offenderet [3] unum-
Quemque poetarum limæ labor et mora. Vos O,
[4] Pompilius sanguis, carmen reprehendite, quod non

On each assistant polish bent,
Days oft in its correction spent.
[5] Because with justice Johnson held
Bright Genius plodding Art excell'd,
Methinks there are, to be revered,
Who soon will scorn to lose their beard;
Will nurse their nails, and but be seen,
In lonely spots, with solemn mein;
In haunts that ease them of pretence
To the dull claim of common sense.
For all, most surely, must regard
As some rare prodigy, the bard
Whose head its honours, never thinn'd
By barber, sporting in the wind,

Multa dies et multa litura coercuit, atque
Præsectum decies non castigavit ad unguem.
[1] Ingenium miserâ quia fortunatior arte
Credit, et excludit sanos Helicone poetas
Democritus; bona pars non ungues ponere curat,
Non barbam, secreta petit loca, balnea vitat.
Nanciscetur enim pretium nomenque poetæ,

Not the famed doctor could make sound,
Where his [1] three mingled charms, of ground
Water and wood, near [2] Lincoln meet
To quiet in the calm retreat.
[3] O ill starr'd I, whom scruples warn
To wash both hands and face at morn:
[4] Else might I be what wits require,
Might seem possess'd of native fire;
And praised with patriots of these times,
Trip in the poetaster's rhymes.
But 'tis no matter. Then let me,
Unnoticed, as a whetstone be,
Of use to sharpen steel alone;
No edge experienced of its own.

Si [1] tribus [2] Anticyris caput insanabile nunquam
Tonsori Licino commiserit. [3] O ego lævus
Qui purgor bilem sub verni temporis horam!
[4] Non alius faceret meliora poemata: verum
Non tanti est: ergo fungar vice cotis, acutum
Reddere quæ ferrum valet, exsors ipse secandi.

Thus others will I teach in fame
To triumph, I must needs disclaim;
Point out the poet's true resource;
What gives his growing fancy force;
Both what unfit appears, and fit,
And what from folly springs or wit.
Spite of imposture vain, good sense
Is the sole source of excellence.
Let [1] Addison's sage tomes inform
Your mind, and with the subject warm,
You will, in words that from it flow,
The fittest elocution show.
Knowing what Duty at his hand
Expects, to serve his native land,

Munus et officium nil scribens ipse, docebo:
Unde parentur opes; quid alat formatque poetam;
Quid deceat, quid non; quo virtus, quo ferat error.
Scribendi rectè, sapere est et principium et fons.
Rem tibi [1] Socraticæ poterunt ostendere chartæ;
Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.
Qui didicit patriæ quid debeat, et quid amicis;

Parent, or brother, friend, or guest;
Or what portraying touches best
Would with each character accord,
Brave chief, just judge, or [1] powerful lord;
His work the poet need not mar;
Nor oft from excellence be far.
He should look round on life besides,
Of error fearful, and as guides
Examples too thence choosing, see
How with each precept they agree.
Sometimes right reason so display'd,
Though art contribute little aid,

Quo sit amore parens, quo frater amandus et hospes;
Quod sit [1] conscripti, quod judicis officium; quæ
Partes in bellum missi ducis; ille profecto
Reddere personæ scit convenientia cuique.
Respicere exemplar vitæ morumque jubebo
Doctum imitatorem, et veras hinc ducere voces.
Interdum speciosa locis, morataque rectè
Fabula, nullius Veneris, sine pondere et arte,
Valdiùs oblectat populum, meliusque moratur,

In draughts from nature not unlike,
With some just sentiments, will strike
The public more than studied sounds,
Tinkling, where common thought abounds.
To the bless'd Greeks the Muse assign'd
Genius and eloquence, their mind
No avarice warping, nor their aim
Aught else but the pursuit of fame.
Our [1] English youth of gain are made
Too thoughtful, in this clime of trade.
Let [2] Ireland's son be skill'd to tell
At what a copy-right will sell,
And if it can his pockets fill,
[3] When he deducts the printer's bill.

Quam versus inopes rerum, nugæque canoræ.
Graiis ingenium, Graiis dedit ore rotundo
Musa loqui, præter laudem nullius avaris.
[1] Romani pueri longis rationibus assem
Discunt in partes centum diducere. Dicas
[2] Filius Albini, [3] si de quincunce remota est
Uncia, quid superat?

Granting 'tis guess'd, we own that he
May keep himself from hardships free:
But can the soul contract a taint
Of interest, and not hope be faint
That poems, due to thirst of pelf,
Seem worthy, taken from the shelf,
[1] With type, and hot-press'd page, as fine
[2] As their exterior gay to shine?
Their pieces poets, or for use,
Or entertainment, all produce;
Or both; their auditors to mend
And gratify, their equal end.
Let all your precepts be concise:
If briefly given, your advice

Poteras dixisse triens. Eu!
Rem poteris servare tuam. Redit uncia: quid fit?
Semis, An hæc animos ærugo et cura peculi
Cum semel imbuerit, speramus carmina fingi
[1] Posse linenda cedro, et [2] levi servenda cupresso?
Aut prodesse volunt, aut delectare poetæ;
Aut simul et jucunda et idonea dicere vitæ.
Quidquid præcipies, esto brevis: ut cito dicta

Attention sooner will obtain,
And longer in the mind remain;
Where largely pour'd, it will not stay,
But, as o'erflowing, pass away.
We well should notice what agrees
With truth and nature, would we please;
Nor dream to find in many, dolts
Whom utter nonsense ne'er revolts.
The rueful carnage feign'd by some
Rivals the warlike [1] work of Thumb,
Who prized the life of man as dross;
Or Chrononhotonthologos.
[1] Grave, moral scenes the pit alike,
And gallery, can with maxims, strike:

Percipiant animi dociles, teneantque fideles.
Omne supervacuum pleno de pectore manat.
Ficta voluptatis causâ sint proxima veris:
Ne, quodcunque volet, poscat sibi fabula credi;
Neu [1] pransæ Lamiæ vivum puerum extrahat alvo.
[2] Centuriæ seniorum agitant expertia frugis:

At which, by love of pleasure drawn,
[1] The front-box loungers laugh, or yawn.
That work most merits, which unites
Both what improves us, and delights.
[2] This Edwards sells, more proudly bound,
This vessels waft the world around;
And this, to authors born obscure,
Can immortality ensure.
But not, in strictness, is required
All excellence, to be admired.
That faults claim pardon, let me own:
For, scarcely tuned, though choice its tone,

---

[1] Celsi prætereunt austera poemata Rhamnes.
Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci,
Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo.
[2] Hic meret æra liber Sosiis, hic et mare transit,
Et longum noto scriptori prorogat ævum.
Sunt delicta tamen, quibus ignovisse velimus.
Nam neque chorda sonum reddit, quem vult manus et mens;

The harmonious string is often found,
To send an unexpected sound;
[1] And, even by our fair archers tried,
The bow will sometimes carry wide.
But when, in the less perfect lines
Prevailing, inspiration shines,
Why should I, because spleen directs,
Condemn aloud a few defects,
Though they to casual haste be due,
Nor save from human weakness grew?
What then are we to think? As, used
To admonition, unexcused
Errs the transcriber; or as keeps
The harper, while his strings he sweeps,

Poscentique gravem persæpe remittit acutum:
[1] Nec semper feriet, quodcunque minabitur arcus.
Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura. Quid ergo est?
Ut scriptor si peccat idem librarius usque,
Quamvis est monitus, veniâ caret; ut citharœdus
Ridetur, chordâ qui semper oberrat eâdem;

A stubborn habit, caution'd much
Against it, still the wrong to touch;
Of bards, on wing too prone to sink,
[1] Like honest Blackmore I should think,
Whom smiling, as with wonder seized,
I praise, if haply he has pleased;
But, when in [2] Milton I have look'd,
His slumbers rare I scarcely brook'd,
Though careful not to blame, as wrong,
In works as weighty as his song.
For poetry, like painting, strikes
The sense; in both the observer likes
Some parts brought near; some further moved;
Some in the shade are most approved;

Sic mihi qui multum cessat, [1] fit Chærilus ille,
Quem bis terve bonum, cum risu miror; et idem
Indignor, quandoque [2] bonus dormitat Homerus.
Verum opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum.
Ut pictura, poesis: erit quæ, si proprius stes,
Te capiat magis; et quædam, si longius abstes:
Hæc amat obscurum;

While some the hypercritic eye,
Examined in the light, defy;
Some once alone the glance invite,
And some repeatedly delight.
[1] O bards of judgment sound, whoe'er
Ye are, that [2] by parental care
Inform'd, [3] or native wit's success,
That title rightfully possess;
To whom Reflection could impart
A deeper knowledge of our art;
You to its votaries can tell
Its difference from all others well.
[4] The inns of court contain a host,
Who never will attainments boast,

---

volet hæc sub luce videri,
Judicis argutum quæ non formidat acumen:
Hæc placuit semel; hæc decies repetita placebit.
[1] O major juvenum, quamvis et [2] voce paternâ
Fingeris ad rectum, et [3] per te sapis; hoc tibi dictum
Tolle memor: certis medium et tolerabile rebus
Rectè concedi: [4] consultus juris, et actor

That give to noisy fame pretence,
Scott's [1] law, or Erskine's [2] eloquence;
And yet successfully may strive
For honour, and with justice thrive;
But it will ne'er be found that rhymes,
In present, past, or future times,
[3] The reading tribe of all degrees
With mediocrity could please.
[4] As a bad fiddle, drum, and pipe,
[5] Or China oranges too ripe,
[6] Or flowers half-wither'd stuck around,
[7] If at an annual dinner found,
Disgust with their appearance more
The guests assembled, as before,

Causarum mediocris, abest [2] virtute diserti
Messalæ, nec [1] scit quantum Cascellius Aulus;
Sed tamen in pretio est: mediocribus esse poetis
[3] Non homines, non Dî, non concessere columnæ.
Ut [7] gratas inter mensas [4] symphonia discors,
Et [6] crassum unguentum, et [5] Sardo cum melle papaver
Offendunt,

With what [1] the tavern else supplied,
Hunger and thirst were satisfied:
So poetry, the mind's dessert,
The nerves of sober sense will hurt,
As useless vanity, and seem
To many foolish in the extreme,
Unless the verse's vivid flow,
And thoughts, superior spirit show.
[2] He ne'er, who badly rides or drives,
[3] Hyde Park would dazzle; nor, at [4] fives,
[5] Billiards, or [6] tennis inexpert,
Will one in public art exert,
Which from the crowd a laugh might get
[7] For a grave, calculated bet.

---

poterat duci quia [1] cœna sine illis;
Sic animis natum inventumque poema juvandis,
Si paulum summo decessit, vergit ad imum.
[2] Ludere qui nescit, [3] campestribus abstinet armis,
Indoctusque [4] pilæ, [5] discique, [6] trochive, quiescit;
[7] Ne spissæ risum tollant impune coronæ;

Yet wondrous! he who is unskill'd
Aspires "the lofty rhyme to build."
"And what forbids? 'tis one, be sure,
Who gives no reason, as not poor,
To think that interest is his plan;
And a most amiable man."
Now mark this counsel free, but which
You well may ponder! poor and rich,
Never to court a tuneful task,
If faculties you want it ask.
Still lest, though fearful to mistake
Your powers, too much you undertake,
[1] Shewing your manuscript, consult
Friends highly valued, and exult
If any prove a [2] judge like [3] Hurd.
But be the final act deferr'd

Qui nescit versus, tamen audet fingere. Quid nî?
Liber et ingenuus; præsertim census equestrem
Summam nummorum, vitioque remotus ab omni.
Tu nihil invitâ dices faciesque Minervâ:
Id tibi judicium, ea mens: si quid tamen olim
[1] Scripseris, in [3] Metii descendat [2] judicis aures,

Of publication; let the work
Nine years within your closet lurk.
Till to the circulating [1] press
It travels from its snug recess,
Each thought awaits your will; but then
You never can correct again.

The lyre that Orpheus struck, who bore
A sacred character of yore,
Reclaim'd the forest's tenants rude
From violence and horrid food.
Hence of its power the tiger fell,
And lion dread to sooth they tell.
The stones too, at Amphion's call,
'Tis said, to form the Theban wall

Et patris et nostras; nonumque prematur in annum.
Membranis intus positis, delere licebit
[1] Quod non ederis; nescit vox missa reverti.
Sylvestres homines sacer interpresque deorum
Cædibus et victu fœdo deterruit Orpheus,
Dictus ab hoc lenire tigres rabidosque leones.
Dictus et Amphion, Thebanæ conditor arcis

Hasten'd, by each enchanting note
Attracted, as the chords he smote.
But moral duties then supplied
The poet's theme; and these he tried
To inculcate, as to all he shew'd
What they or to each other owed,
The state, or honour'd powers above;
Or to restrain promiscuous Love:
Bind loose Desire with nuptial ties;
Frame wholesome laws; bid cities rise.
[1] Antiquity used hence to assign
The bard a character divine.
Inspiring love of martial fame,
Homer to these (a mighty name!)

Saxa movere sono testudinis, et prece blandâ
Ducere quo vellet. Fuit hæc sapientia quondam
Publica privatis secernere, sacra profanis;
Concubitu prohibere vago; dare jura maritis;
Oppida moliri; legis incidere ligno.
[1] Sic honor et nomen divinis vatibus atque
Carminibus venit. Post hos insignis Homerus

Succeeded; and Tyrtæus,[1] he
Who to preserve a nation free,
His animating shell awoke.
Famed oracles in numbers spoke.
In modern, as in ancient time,
Has Wisdom taught, in verse sublime:
And kings, surrounded by a throng
Of poets boasted in their song
Present alike and future praise;
While, in the studious shade, their lays
The cares of life could sweetly hush—
THUS NEED YOUR CALLING RAISE NO BLUSH.
Whether 'tis art or nature, most
That earns the honour poems boast,

---

[1] Tyrtæusque mares animos in Martia bella
Versibus exacuit. Dictæ per carmina sortes,
Et vitæ monstrata via est; et gratia regum
Pieriis tentata modis, ludusque repertus,
Et longorum operum finis; NE FORTE PUDORI
SIT TIBI MUSA LYRÆ SOLERS, ET CANTOR APOLLO.
Naturâ fieret laudabile carmen, an arte

Is doubted; yet are both required
So much, nor study uninspired
By favouring Sense, nor Genius rude,
To excel, can we enough conclude.
[1] The hind who wins the race, ne'er strung
His sinews in the shop, when young,
Of a man-milliner; [2] and less
Indulges, hopeful of success,
At fairs with nimble gait to shine,
In joys of women and of wine.
[3] The fifer dreads, ere aught he knows,
A military master's blows,
Our ears, while yet the morning's dark,
Long [4] grating in St. James's Park.

Quæsitum est. Ego nec studium sine divite vena,
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium: alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res, et conjurat amicè.
[1] Qui studet opatatam cursu contingere metam,
Multa tulit fecitque puer; sudavit et alsit;
[2] Abstinuit Venere et vino. [3] Qui [4] Pythia cantat,
Tibicen, didicit prius, extimuitque magistrum.

But 'tis enough for every dunce
To mutter foppishly at once,
" I too write poems. In our race
Deuce take the hindmost, while disgrace
Were sure, unless, howe'er untrain'd,
Each nerve, to distance wits, I strain'd,
And ignorance, by word or look,
Shew'd, when my toil I undertook."
[1] As auctioneers persuasive stand,
The hammer waving in their hand;
So oft the wealthy poet draws
From rival flatterers applause,
With hopes, [2] the rent of an estate,
[3] And money in the funds, create.

Nunc satis est dixisse, ego mira poemata pango:
Occupet extremum scabies: mihi turpe relinqui est,
Et, quod non didici, sane nescire fateri.
[1] Ut præco ad merces turbam qui cogit emendas;
Assentatores jubet ad lucrum ire poeta
Dives [2] agris, dives [3] positis in fœnore nummis.

If one, of equal kindness sure,
Keep open house; or bail the poor,
And debtors he distress'd may see
From officers of justice free;
'Twere a true miracle to find
In him a clear unbiass'd mind.
The friend, who reads your work, no gift
Should to a pitch of rapture lift;
Lest, urged by Prudence to repay
All obligations, he should say,
Whate'er its merit, "bravo! well;"
His wonder sudden paleness tell,
Or, tears half starting from his eyes,
His gestures indicate surprise.

Si vero est, unctum qui rectè ponere possit,
Et spondere levi pro paupere, et eripere arctis
Litibus implicitum; mirabor, si sciet inter-
Noscere mendacem verumque beatus amicum.
Tu seu donaris, seu quid donare voles cui;
Nolito ad versus tibi factos ducere plenum
Lætitiæ; clamabit enim, pulchrè, benè, rectè!
Pallescet; super his etiam stillabit amicis
Ex oculis rorem; saliet; tundet pede terram.

[1] As those who howl till out of breath,
In Ireland, to lament some death,
Still are afflicted less than one
Who, silently, then weeps a son;
Even so less noisy will appear
The approbation that's sincere.
Princes successfully enough
Have tried, with bumpers, of what stuff
Each friend was made, 'twas their desire
To sound, and know the man entire.
So a friend's mind should you divine,
As spoke with all the truth of wine;
Nor fear, while he his breast unlocks,
The falsehood of the lurking fox.

---

[1] Ut qui conducti plorant in funere, dicunt
Et faciunt prope plura dolentibus ex animo: sic
Derisor vero plus laudatore movetur.
Reges dicuntur multis urgere cuculis,
Et torquere mero quem perspexisse laborent
An sit amicitæ dignus. Si carmina condes,
Nunquam te fallant animi sub vulpe latentes.

[1] Sooner the roughness would I choose
Of growling Johnson to the Muse;
Who, a new play did you refer
To him, for an opinion, " Sir,
[2] You the production," might return,
" Would well correct, [3] but better burn."
Perhaps it were not ill to say
The same thing in a [4] softer way.
But sure the friend that's good and wise
Some passages will criticize;
Will point the line which he esteems
Too feeble; what too rugged seems;

---

[1] Quintilio si quid recitares; [2] corrige sodes
Hoc, aiebat, et hoc. Melius te posse negares;
Bis terque expertum frustra? [3] Delere jubebat,
Et male tornatos incudi reddere versus.
Si defendere delictum, quam vertere malles:
[4] Nullum ultra verbum, aut operam insumebat inatem,
Quin sine rivali teque et tua solus amares.
Vir bonus et prudens versus reprehendet inertes;
Culpabit duros;

On what to finish was bestow'd
Scarce time; where ornaments o'erload;
Or clearness an expression needs;
Or an ambiguous sense misleads:
Some alteration, suiting best
The nature of the work suggest;
[1] Nor less than Walsh, in grateful lays,
Merit his poet's deathless praise.
He will not say, "'tis wrong a friend,
In trifles such as this, to offend;"
[2] For scribblers the satiric pen
Mourn'd often, and will mourn again.
Like one, for [3] northern itch immured,
Or [4] evil in the south erst cured,

---

incomptis allinet atrum
Transverso calamo signum; ambitiosa recidet
Ornamenta; parum claris lucem dare coget;
Arguet ambiguè dictum; mutanda notabit;
[1] Fiet Aristarchus; non dicet, cur ego amicum
Offendam in nugis? [2] Hæ nugæ seria ducent
In mala derisum semel, exceptumque sinistrè.
[3] Ut mala quem scabies, aut [4] morbus regius urget,

Or madness, whose rude fits dispose,
Like[1] errant[2] Quixottes[3] rage, to blows;
All keep the fashion, unenjoy'd,
The mad bard's company to avoid.
The boys alone, whene'er they meet,
Hoot him, or follow down the street.
He, readier to repeat with grace
His rhymes, than right his feet to place,
While, as one[4] hawking, he pursues
With upward eyes his flying Muse,
Will seem of life not over fond,
First, if he stray into a pond.
But if he then cry "help!" and show
No loaded pockets keep him low,

Aut fanaticus [1] error, et [2] iracunda [3] Diana;
Vesanum tetigisse timent fugiuntque poetam,
Qui sapiunt: agitant pueri, incautique sequuntur.
Hic dum sublimes versus ructatur, et errat,
Si veluti [4] merulis intentus decidit auceps
In puteum, foveamque; licet, succurrite, longum
Clamet, io cives: non sit qui tollere curet.

Relieved, I joking, should protest
The man was certainly possess'd:
And then to those around relate
The old Sicilian poet's fate.
" It was Empedocles's whim,
Too chilly in the stream to swim,
A lava bath's effect to prove,
And plunge in Etna's gulf, to move
Wonder, as one of heavenly birth,
Unmark'd retiring from the earth.
[1] Were we not Christians, truly I
Should counsel you to let him die;
[2] And the bard's privilege assume
Enjoy'd in suicidal Rome.

Si curet quis opem ferre, et demittere funem;
Qui scis, an prudens huc se projecerit, atque
Servari noluit? Dicam; Siculique poetæ
Narrabo interitum. Deus immortalis haberi
Dum cupit Empedocles, ardentem frigidus Ætnam
Insiluit. [1] Sit jus liceatque perire [2] poetis.
Invitum qui servat, idem facit occidenti.

[1] But we must watch in future still,
Nor henceforth let him have his will.
For whose rare crime must he atone,
Lost wretch! [2] his parents' or [3] his own?"
[4] As late all fear'd the tiger's rage,
Seen stalking distant from his cage;
So, learned or unlearned, all
He chases: while the thoughts appal
Of what may happen—to be read,
By his oppressive rhymes, half-dead:
Which fate he would ensure to each,
Close and exhausting, as a leech."

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[1] Nec semel hoc fecit, nec si retractus erit jam,
Fiet homo, et ponet famosæ mortis amorem.
Nec satis apparet, cur versus factitet; utrum
Minxerit in [2] patrios cineres, [3] an triste bidental
Moverit incestus: certe furit, et [4] velut ursus
Objectos caveæ valuit si frangere clathros,
Indoctum doctumque fugat recitator acerbus.
Quem vero arripuit, tenet, occiditque legendo,
Non missura cutem, nisi plena cruoris hirudo.

NOTES.

PAGE 51. line 1.—Mr. Fuseli's style, of which he has given such good examples, furnishes the opening with a parallel, which it would otherwise want.

P. 53. l. 8.—The ingenious lady to whose romances I allude, has so happy a talent for descriptions of this sort, that we may be fearful lest a similar remark, made by critics of reputation, should deter her from exerting it; as she has been induced, (whether from the same cause or not, I cannot pronounce,) to exclude every thing poetical from her last work. But, if introduced with art, and not too frequently, such poetry as hers would not fail to be acceptable.

What seems more objectionable, is the style of writing that she has adopted in imitation of the

late Lord Orford, who has admitted into the romance, which is a species of composition of a tragic cast, that unrestrained delineation of character, which is only proper in comedy, and in the novel.

P. 53. l. 14.—The cypress of the original is less characteristic of English art than the oak.

P. 54. l. 7.—It is to be hoped, that these opposite rocks and shoals of composition may be so well pointed out after repeated soundings, in future charts, that no literary landsman, who talks of what he does not understand, may have an excuse for representing as a matter of opinion, or for dissembling, as it may suit himself, either the merit or demerit of subsequent adventurers. Burke's assistant *observations* should be now resorted to.

P. 55. l. 9.—I have not chiefly imagined to myself the case supposed by Bishop Hurd, of minute and tasteless workmanship, because there are now other prejudices in favour of *parts* full as hurtful to works of genius; and because a sculptor knows that the hair of a statue is capable of discovering fancy in the artist. Horace, as I wished to interpret him,

speaks of attention confined to parts, through a deficiency of judgment or of knowledge, as well as of genius.

P. 56. l. 1.—It appears to me from this whole part, that the above may be an interpretation well justified by the text. We may suppose an English sculptor to be described here, who has not regularly gone through his studies at Rome, and therefore *caret arte.* One of our painters, from this partial unskilfulness, was observed to shrink from the task of drawing the naked body, and, though difficult, has esteemed it less so to cover his figures with drapery. His genius, however, was well able to produce *a whole.*

P. 56. l. 12.—Pope and Gray particularly excel in their adherence to this rule; since in their poems, what is good is almost the whole. There seems to me no poem of any consequence written by the former, that shows so little judgment in the general idea, and in the execution, as the Ode on St. Cecilia's Day. There may be a good stanza or two, but the series of thoughts is not *lecta*

potenter; and though the first stanza, as it has been said, may minutely describe a concert, yet I rather doubt whether its airy images are general and palpable enough for the great effects of poetry. At least, I recollect no great poet who has pleased us by a long and discriminative description of mere music.

P. 57. l. 7.—At a time when novelty and false originality is so much admired, perhaps the beginning of the part that follows may be more serviceable as a rule than the conclusion. This whole subject is treated by the Bishop of Worcester with the soundness, as well as ingenuity of criticism, which is usual with him.

P. 61. l. 3.—I approve, however, much more of experiment than surmise. If any one prefer rhyme in writing an epic poem, let the attempt be made; and our posterity will decide as much better than we can at present, as we have decided better upon the verse and prose of dramatic composition, than our ancestors in the time of Dryden. If the measure be disapproved, the poem, if good, will nevertheless be read, and it will exemplify to future

historians and philosophers, the present state of opinion on one point of criticism. But I own I think favourably of a late recommendation, of blank verse upon the whole for long, and rhyme for short, poems. The expression of *minor poets* seems to mark a natural division of poets into two sorts, which corresponds with this idea; and certainly rhyme may please the ear in fewer lines than blank verse.

It appears to me that there is no small respect due, not only to the notion of a particular measure being fit for a particular composition, but also of the sound being an echo to the sense; greater at least than Dr. Johnson seemed to suppose, when he adduced, in support of his arguments, (see *Life of Pope*, pages 120 and 121), some Alexandrines intended to express opposite sentiments.

It is, I think, by that *effect* which opposite ideas are capable of producing, that we have felt ourselves affected in an opposite manner with the same verse. These different sentiments unite in

being *remarkable*, and therefore both may, in some degree, suit with any verse which is *remarkable*. Opposite sentiments may have some common property besides effect, such as animation; and this is, perhaps, another reason why the same measure may be suitable to both. So that sounds, however little to be relied upon regularly and *solely*, may well concur with the art of the poet to enforce sentiments analogous to their supposed nature; and therefore, one measure may, by its original structure, be preferable to another.

According to the principles just mentioned, and (as will be presently seen) agreeably to Burke's account of tastes, (in the consideration of which even small matters appeared to him important) the ordinary verse (in couplets) of eight syllables, and that of seven syllables, have each pleased when used in different manners, and either where they prevailed alone, or mixed in the same poem. The first of these has been adopted alone by Gray, in an epitaph; and, thus used, is, by its rapid march, capable of expressing true poetry;

though on the other hand, it is very commonly thought to accord with mirth. Its connection with it is most plainly discernible in the ludicrous heroic-comical poem. The measure of Hudibras is nearly this; only rendered characteristically still more ludicrous by means of rhymes. That of the Rape of the Lock is, on the contrary, suited to the solemnity of epic grace, as well as grandeur, which is there assumed, and by which it conveys true poetry as it were by stealth. Its length affords the ear a pause, sufficient for gradual variation of sound, and makes the single lines more capable of the sublime arising from variety; but is not particularly connected with the *elevation* produced by mirth.

It may appear at first, from this description of the measure, that it is adapted to the ode. But though it has briskness, it has also uniformity less characteristic of it. It seems therefore well used for *the familiar verse epistle*, in which a heightened sentiment will, as in comedy, be sometimes natural, and yet, continual elevation is as far from being essential to it, as it is to comedy.

The second sort of verse, of seven syllables, is to be seen alone both in the translations of the bold Runic poetry, and, as well as the other, in Cowley's Anacreontic odes, and poems of a like character. For such compositions it may be the most proper, because the *irregularity* of the mixture of these verses has been made by Gray happily expressive of the character of a *wild*, barbarous poetry. Yet there is something *chantant* in the other that renders it very suitable to a *war song*.

Milton's Allegro and Penseroso sufficiently instance the mixture of these verses in poems of an opposite character. Here I will observe that, perhaps, because in these poems, which may be considered as odes to Mirth and Melancholy, or rather as a new kind of composition, Milton has used a descriptive style, Dyer, in a valuable descriptive poem, has, however, innovated, and chosen to reject the more solemn-paced verse of Pope and Denham, which seems much better calculated to convey an adequate idea of the romantic hills and woods of Brecknockshire.

In going however, so minutely, and in appearance earnestly, into the subject, I would be understood to mean, with due liberality, that a composition, such for instance as an ode or sonnet, may, by too great irregularity of metre, or by a deficiency in the number of rhymes, violate *a rule*, and seem unfinished, without perceptibly violating *character*. I allow too for the moderate demand, which even good taste is always making, for novelty, and of course for change; and I have already spoken of the effect of time, in determining the propriety of a measure.

As the same sort of verse has been thought adapted to different sorts of composition, from their similarity of tone, so different sorts of verse have been required for the same sort of composition, from the difference of tones it assumes, even where there is not a necessary and connected variety of measures, as in the ode. Both local and didactic poetry have, without at least manifest impropriety, been exhibited as well in blank verse as in rhyme. It seems as if in poems of a

middle length, which form the boundaries between blank verse and rhyme, something of both ought to be perceived; and as they are more descriptive, and less moral or argumentative, they are upon the whole more fit for blank verse, and less so for rhyme.

There is a natural division of the objects of our consideration into sacred and profane, which we may be here reminded of, as recommending to us respect equally for the *Gothic* and the *classical* styles of *architecture*; and for that reason making it necessary to attend to the character of each. By a kind of fiction, perhaps, a mansion may with propriety be built in the former style; but if this custom were to become general, it would lose that sanctity of character which it at present has. A palace, or a seat of learning, is with great propriety built in the grandest style of Grecian architecture; and as these, either by the laws of the country, or the endowments of colleges, may be connected with religion, there may also be a reason why they should often appear in a Gothic form; but our taste ought not

to lead us much further. Thus, in this art also, we see instances where different styles of *structure* are connected by the common use they are applied to.

There exists a prejudice, however, *against* the Gothic style, notwithstanding it is that which is the most constantly picturesque, which would not only encroach upon, but condemn it; I may be justified, therefore, in making a digression to oppose this prejudice. As the beauty of the objects that it furnishes cannot be denied, they have been supposed to derive their effect chiefly from their state of *ruin*, or from their *antiquity*. We are therefore discouraged from producing new examples of it, and more particularly from multiplying its finest examples, which must be always churches of the largest dimensions; of which the numerous small parts (though consisting with general unity) and the unapparent laws of the structure, are somewhat analogous to the mysterious objects of religious thought: the tall clustering columns forming channels for the ascending voice of praise, and the tapering pinnacles appearing to point to heaven.

The French, I believe, have *classical* prejudices against this style; yet they might discover reasons for converting the prejudices of lettered men in favour of it. If the origin of Grecian architecture was coeval with the birth of learning, that of the pure Gothic was coincident with its revival; and if we derive more pleasure from Grecian literature, by associating the idea of it with other Grecian arts, we shall derive less from Dante and Petrarch (a writer of whose residence the French are so proud), unless we will allow of similar assistance from the monuments of that poetical superstition, which charms us in the history of Eloïsa and Abelard. The taste for the Gothic, therefore, must improve our relish for literature, no less than the other. Without it, the pleasures of the imagination would be materially abridged, and the associations of ideas confined; whereas, with it, there is nothing left for us to desire.

Perhaps this architecture was in its purest state in the reign of Edward the Third; who seems to have been the English *Louis Quatorze*, both

from his having lived in a learned age, and from having been actuated by a spirit of conquest. But is it not strikingly qualified to excite aversion to this very spirit of conquest, by calling to mind those times, when independent states were forming, and national liberty gradually establishing, after the destruction of the power of ancient Rome? Senate houses, perhaps, might with propriety be built in Gothic architecture, in order to commemorate the grand delivery of the world from subjection to the only power, which has yet been able to accomplish designs of universal minion.

P. 61. l. 5.—Upon the subject of Elegy, a very different opinion is expressed by Dr. Johnson, where he treats of the metre * proper for it; and observes, that "the quatrain of ten syllables" has not an elegiac character, and that it was thought by Dryden to be the most magnificent of all metres. It may be said in answer, that Dryden had not seen its effect tried:

* Life of Hammond.

that, at least, no such elegy as *the Country Churchyard* existed to manifest it; and also, that the elegy may have some mixture of magnificence. But that, in any measure, pauses may be so contrived as to alter the effect, blank verse in the hands of different poets will prove. Accordingly, if, in this measure, the pauses are not sufficiently often at the close of the lines, the more irregular structure of these may take from the calmness and solemnity necessary for elegy, and produce an effect similar to that perceived by Dryden; though his example in adopting this measure has not been followed by subsequent poets in the epic line. Shenstone has observed, that "the "public ear, habituated of late to a quicker measure, "may perhaps consider this as heavy and languid; "but an objection of that kind may gradually lose "its force, if this measure should be allowed to suit "the nature of elegy." Whatever may be the cause, whether custom or its own merits, it now seems generally preferred in elegy.

In order to enforce his argument, Johnson re-

presents "*gentleness and tenuity*" as the character of the elegy. The works of Tibullus are certainly much marked with this character; but I do not know whether this is allowed to be a full description of it. M. de Marmontel observes, there are three sorts of elegy; that of Tibullus, or the tender; that of Propertius, or the impassioned; and that of Ovid, or the graceful and elegant *(gracieux)*. The elegy of Gray is marked with calmness, but not with the qualities that Johnson mentions; which hardly consist with that philosophical dignity, and those solemn and even sublime ideas, which prevail in many parts of it. The same critic, who was not so far struck with Shenstone's argument concerning metre, mentioned above, as to undertake to discuss it, praises nevertheless his notion * of the nature of elegy; which he describes to be "the effusion of a "contemplative mind, sometimes plaintive, and "always serious, and therefore superior to the glitter "of false ornaments." This seems a more complete character of it than the other; though, if we judge of

* Life of Shenstone.

elegy by the remains of the ancient elegiac poets; and by Horace's account of it in these lines,

> Versibus impariter junctis querimonia primum,
> Post etiam inclusa est voti sententia compos,

> Couplets unequal were at first confined
> To speak in broken verse the mourner's mind;
> Prosperity at length, and free content,
> In the same numbers gave their raptures vent;
>
> COLMAN.

we shall not think continued seriousness necessary to it. But we have perhaps adhered, more closely than the later ancients, to the primary idea of elegy. We might not, for instance, rank as such the beautiful poem of Tibullus on Sulpicia. At least, any thing of its light and sportive character hardly seems to us to be elegiac, unless we superadd some cause of grief, though equally light and sportive.

It appears, indeed, that poetical lamentation is capable of calling forth the peculiar beauties of each of the three Roman poets. But we now permit elegy to

exceed its original limits so far, that *thoughtfullness* may, as truly as any thing, be assigned for its character: though, should the derivation of the name, and its original office, bias us to prefer "grief" to it, we may, in some sense, be said not to have passed its limits. For our elegy may be referred to general, if not to particular grief, in *melancholy*; which produces a thoughtfulness and regularity of style, and is sufficiently fertile of poetical beauty, to deserve a verse separately allotted.

P. 61. l. 13.—The pointed emphasis of this verse accords well with it, whether personal, or general; for I must own, I am no enemy to personal satire, applied with the selection, and of course, infrequency, of good principles. It in that case only habituates us to a forgiving good humour, and prevents the appearance of a Zanga; while on the other hand, an indiscriminate attack of every thing, whether right or wrong, inures us to, and renders us careless of, the censures of the world. Perhaps Horace's style is most suited to general, and Juvenal's to personal, satire. The *amputation* of criticism, is

desirable for nothing but the unnatural excrescences of literature; and the reasoner may address himself to the reason, and the eloquent declaimer to the feelings, while they co-operate with each other for giving scope to their peculiar powers.

Assistance is afforded to satire by the passions; as we know,

Facit indignatio versum;

and the satyrist may perhaps rank *one* step lower for it; but this very assistance which satire owes to human passions, gives it a claim to favour on account of that utility which it can exclusively exercise, though it cannot exclusively create. Nothing can be more founded on nature than satire, according to a test that has been established; for I would ask, if, according to that test, we lose all relish for it with the knowledge of the characters which are its object, how comes it to pass that we at this day prefer the Roman satirists to all others? The news-monger may wish to be more fully acquainted with the persons satirized by Juvenal; but the critic and man

of taste will not have lost so much, but that he will have a clear idea of the general merit of his poetry. Comedy, I apprehend, loses more than satire by time, since it represents more minutely and exactly the manners of a particular period; but even that preserves an interest to the latest ages.

The verse here referred to, seems the general one to which recourse is had for all poetry which has not a different measure particularly assigned to it. The *Eloisa to Abelard* may cause a doubt, whether all those shorter poems that are marked with fancy, sublimity, and pathos, can be written in the measures of the English ode and elegy: but I am by no means sure of the contrary; and probably, not only the soothing tenderness of Tibullus, and the sublime solemnity of Gray, can be expressed in the elegiac stanza, but also, *if necessary*, the abrupt empassioned style that characterizes parts of this poem. The measure of elegy being adapted to lamentation, that of Milton's Lycidas might perhaps be appropriated to the *monody*, considered rather as pastoral, than as elegiac. The irregularity both of its rhymes and verses may

be suited to artless sentiment. I have mentioned, in another place, my conviction of the propriety of translating Italian poets in their own stanza, or verse: might not their stanza, or that of Spenser, agreeably to this idea, be adopted in allegorical poems of an old Italian or Provençal cast? The association of ideas may likewise direct to the choice of metre in other instances.

P. 62. l. 4.—I must own, I approve of the Bishop of Worcester's observation, of ACTION being the object of Tragedy, and MANNERS of Comedy. It is not but that manners are sometimes more difficult to paint in tragedy than in comedy, and discover the greatest talents; their fitness for it, indeed, being acknowledged. I did not, on the other hand, recollect any similar observation, when I remarked in a former work, that comedy was compensated by the power of admitting an equal proportion of action, without making it its direct object.

It will be useful to consider *manners* in three lights: and FIRST, when they appear alone, and constitute the essence of comedy. Action may then be

compared to the animal spirits, when, however great, they do not tend to interrupt attention to ordinary objects, but rather fix it, by preserving and continuing the same tone of mind. For either the pleasure derived from cheerful society is the result, or another social pleasure arises from gratifying curiosity in a sober and contemplative mood, by observing such passions and distresses of men, as serve but to unfold their characters. In both cases, the objects of attention are superficial, and our eye still remains fixed upon *manners*; though by means of a more rapid and enlivening succession of ideas, than when either joy or grief is monotonous in those characters. A *display* of manners is here the object.

Secondly, they may appear subordinate, and assistant to action. Mr. Pye justly notices Aristotle's happy illustrative remark, comparing them to the colouring of a picture. Colouring is one of the most difficult parts of painting; and a picture of Titian approaches in value to one of Raphael. I shall adhere to my own comparison, in order fully to explain

myself. We will suppose this vivacity and animation which I have been describing, and which I compare to action, where the possessor is afflicted by accumulated misfortune extending to all around him, and consequently expresses his feelings in a manner proportionate to his sensibility. Here we have no longer leisure to gratify sympathetic curiosity by his distress, nor to make minute remarks upon his conduct; we are absorbed in reflection on his *singular* fate, and overwhelmed with pity. This effect is heightened by a rapid and striking succession of ideas, as well as the former. The only difference is, that the vivacity, which resembles dramatic *action*, calls the attention here to itself; instead of assisting it to dwell amusively on indifferent appearances, such as manners.

On this subject, Mr. Twining agrees with the Bishop; but Dr. Warton asks, are not the strokes of manners in Othello and Macbeth, as admirable as anywhere; and must not there be manners in tragedy? To both questions I answer, yes; but they are there pressed into the office of the passions, and

are admirable as their representatives. Indeed, common sense discovers of how little comparative importance manners are, where ideas of self preservation are excited. I observe too another circumstance. There is a distinction in Burke's Essay between "sensible objects and the passions, on the one hand; "and the characters, actions, and designs of men, "their relations, &c." on the other, the latter of which is separated by him from the former, in the "province of the judgment." Therefore, when the Bishop was urging, that tragic poets should have no other object in view but that of affecting the mind, and raising the passions, it seems a fortunate thought to recommend action as the means; and thus intimate, that the understanding has some part in composition; as if foreseeing the tendency of criticism to produce the vain, wild, and improbable *pathos* of the German school. A truth of manners, therefore, is the object of tragedy, with regard to them; but, as such, I will so far agree with the learned and ingenious critic I dissent from, that a *display* of them is often necessary.

These reflections may shew us the impropriety of that sort of French play called *drame*, which neither exhibits the most striking circumstances in human events, nor is careful to render distress interesting by a forcible delineation of manners; and yet expects from us application of thought sufficient to attend to it. Its tragic tones are like those of the modern philanthropist, whose refined code of morality gives an importance to trifles, which is only understood by the initiated. Sometimes a comedy attempts gaiety, and yet equally, and with equal impropriety, fixes the attention upon action. Addison's Drummer is an instance of this, in which, the scenes have certainly the elegant language of a periodical paper; and parts of the plot, especially its conclusion, discover sensible composition; but which has a coldness that prevents us from being surprised that it is so much neglected. Dr. Johnson's remark of a comedy's having the operation of a tragedy, would be applied to this with peculiar happiness. It is precisely its character; for it is the ultimate event, and not the means by which it is brought about, that seems to

interest us. It may be compared to the grave gentleman, who resolves to be facetious among his company, but has not the *small talk* which Lord Chesterfield recommends to ward off impertinent allusions to his interests and their own; nor keep away the subjects of

Fate and chance, and change in human life.

It is not the *mighty good joke* of frightening the domestics with a drum, that can be supposed to have any thing in it truly *comic*. We ought, in comedy, to think less of what is done, than of who does it; and the more astonishing the incidents, the less comic. The German critic, Lessing, observes the resemblance between farce and tragedy. They both *endeavour* to excite the passions; for, as Longinus remarks, "laughter is a passion." But in comedy, this is only excited incidentally, in the portraiture of manners, which is its constant aim. When comedy becomes farcical, it resembles the wag, who interposes ill timed jokes to interrupt

"The feast of reason, and the flow of soul."

I proceed, THIRDLY, to mention *manners* as related to time and place. In this view, they will have been considered by Ulysses as furnishing a comparison between foreign countries and his own; who

"—Wandering from clime to clime observant stray'd,
" Their *manners* noted, and their states survey'd.
POPE'S ODYSSEY.

This historical sort of effect is favourable to poetical elevation, and to those works where it is required, by the ornament of particular *costumi*. Its character is the *strange*, and produces *surprise*; which, according to Burke, harmonises with the sublime, and of course, with compositions which are sublime. It assists epic poetry, as it does tragedy; resembling a fancy-dress, which prevents the future effect of *quaintness* in a portrait. It is not of so much service to comedy, since it gives it the awkwardness of an old fashion: the painter's hand, however, may always please us. It appears to form a sort of incrustation that impedes, or incumbers, the display of manners; and so much the more, as the times to which they

belong are distant. Cibber's works have little of it yet; Congreve's and Wycherley's something more; and Jonson's a great deal more. Yet Terence, and even Aristophanes, where he drops the style of farce, give us that peculiar pleasure which results from comedy. Hume's criticism, however, was that of a true historian, when, in describing the advantage of a comedy over a philosophical system, in point of durable fame, he represents it as aiming to *paint the manners of the age.* Its proper object, is to exhibit a representation of general society. Considered as painting the manners of a former age, or distant country, it distracts the attention to a certain degree; although it may still retain an advantage over a philosophical system.

Pastoral poetry occupies a kind of middle situation between tragedy and comedy. It has been rightly affirmed to be more *general* than the former; and it is more *particular* than the latter, from its describing, not life in general, but country life. Its object is to charm us with whatever is pleasing, or can be imagined so, in it. *Rural manners* are the principal

means of this; the display of which ought not to be impeded by the particularity of the *strange*. Asiatic or American eclogues must, of course, as pastoral poems, be incumbered by their imagery, which, though it would be remarkably assistant to *epic* poetry, such as that of Camoëns, or D'Ercilla, would obtrude local ideas upon the pastoral poet, ill calculated to give us a striking picture of rural life. On the other hand, the manners that would be described by him not being intended, like those in comedy, to strike simply by the force of truth, but by some admirable and engaging accession, any extraordinary customs that could coalesce with such manners, and assist their character, would form an exception to the general rule. The ancient mythology may perhaps be made, consistently with poetical probability, to have this effect; and to be only *strange* in proportion as it is characteristic. In painting, Claude and Poussin add character to their landscapes when the figures are shepherds; but where the Eastern *costumi* are introduced in a fancy-piece, they must either take away from the effect, or at least not

give any, except what is owing to the painter's skill and to accidental circumstances. *Orientalism* in a picture, would be seen in perfection where fancy should be entirely out of the case, as in the views of Daniel and Hodges; or where fancy and truth should be blended, as in a history-piece representing some battle or embassy in India.

The pastorals of Virgil and Theocritus suggest two things as desirable to their imitators. The one is, to describe the surrounding country and its inhabitants, as they see them; and the other, to recommend their fictions, by resorting for images and ideas to the beautiful mythology of Greece and Rome. These two objects Pope and (a greater pastoral poet) Milton, were unable to unite; and it seems impossible for a modern to do so in any single species of rural eclogue. I should therefore propose two sorts of eclogue. One of them might, as it were, exhibit a classical landscape, the scene Arcadia, in which nothing heterogeneous should appear, as in Sir Philip Sydney's work called by that name, while the shepherds represented should speak and act according

to the supposed character of Arcadians. Here, indeed, the gods of Greece and Rome might be introduced, with probability, even in our poetry; which they would, by only putting all allusions to them in the mouths of the characters. The other sort might be in the style of Gainsborough, and exhibit a domestic scene at the present time. The names ought to be same in both, and such as are usual in pastorals; 'n the former, as being suited to the country; and in the other, as shadowing under them modern rustics, whom it might be impossible to mention otherwise, consistently with good taste. The passion also, of love would better, I think, be described plaintively in the former. Several idylliums of Theocritus are upon subjects proper for the latter.

P. 62. l. 7.—With respect to the measure of the ode, which is not here mentioned, we may observe, that a stanza is almost constantly adopted by us. Here, therefore, theory might unite with practice in determining the adoption of it, or, at least, the exclusion of couplets, to be a characteristic. Epigram

is different; for if we consider short poetical inscriptions as epigrams, it is adapted to every kind of measure, except the stanza of Spenser, or similar ones. I have spoken of a verse of seven syllables in couplets as not ill suited to love odes; but the lyrical effect of it is more sensible in stanzas; and it was on this account, and because it agreed with the verse as well as the character of Petrarch's ode at Laura's favourite fountain, that I made great use of it in my translation.

I will not dispute our having exhibited flights equal, or superior, to the ancients in lyric poetry; but perhaps, if it is indispensable to study them in any line, it is in this. The narrative style, which is so much used by Pindar, is seldom, if ever, to be found in any other lyric; and yet if transition characterizes the ode, variety of styles increases the means of its effect, as it is, of itself, the support of epic poetry: the dramatic style, which is usual with Horace, we have good instances to boast of. It has often struck me, that the ode might, advantageously for this art, be compared with conversation. Those

who insist upon methodical arrangement in the former, would probably ridicule any thing like formal regularity in the latter; and even allow less of it than ought always to be in the ode. If a person at table with a party were, by lively sallies and pointed remarks, to interrupt the thread of the story he was relating to the company, they would not object to his digressions, if they were digressions marked with propriety; and it would be allowed, that this *liveliness* was the character of conversation. I think, however, that Pindar does not always preserve the just bounds of the *tenui deducta poemata filo*, though one instance where he does is in the ode which I have translated, and which at the same time possesses sublimity not unworthy of the poet so well characterized by Pope in these lines:

> Across the harp a *careless* hand he flings,
> And boldly sinks into the sounding strings.

A remarkable apparent freedom, yet consistent with good sense and finished composition, is necessary in the greater ode.

I attempted to introduce a small degree of the narrative style into the fourth song of the Battle of Eddington, not recollecting to have seen an instance of it in any English ode. Of our lyric poems I think Dryden's ode rather to be preferred; but I consider Gray of a more lyric genius, and Collins (not however solely from his Ode on the Passions) as the nearest in merit to them.

P. 62. l. 13.—Aristotle only insinuates the propriety of keeping the character of every sort of composition distinct, both in regard to metre, and in all other respects. But Horace here makes it a positive duty, as far as his undoubted liberality to genius in every shape will permit. The reducing poetry to principles, will at once interest persons of every degree of natural taste in the cause of literature. For tastes no more dignified than the *goût de comparaison*, though they do not entitle a person always to judge, or condemn, positively, yet if they are attainable by all minds, are more capable, perhaps, than others, of diffusing the enjoyments of literature. This undertaking in criticism might likewise

enlarge the sphere of any one's ideas in conversation; who would speak with a just confidence upon subjects relating to it, when he did not start an opinion of his own, but only drew inferences from rules of composition which had been already approved of. I will here, once for all, observe, that critics and artists who collect together all the elements of an art lying scattered, as Cicero describes them, in nature, deserve much praise; and those are influenced by a spirit of theory, who, in their impatience for the fame of producing something, confound the few that they can trace out with heterogeneities; or who, with an equal indifference to truth, deny that any elements can reward our patient search. To form systems (as it has been observed) is inevitable; we can only avoid admitting the phenomena that merely exist in the imagination.

Neither Aristotle, Horace, nor Boileau, have attempted to found composition upon *reason*. Bacon's division of *learning*, in which he includes all the arts, approaches the nearest to such an attempt; but every species of composition

must surely be capable of being so founded. Thus, epic poetry arises from our disposition to relate, and to hear related, the actions of men: the drama, from the power we have discovered of exhibiting them by perfect imitation: pastoral poetry, from that of giving, by both these means, a picture of rural simplicity: the ode and elegy, from an inclination to express fully our sentiments, and to indulge our fancy upon particular occasions. In doing this, we adopt, according to our subject, either a contemplative style, as in the elegy; or a brisk and animated one, as in the ode; and these two, respectively and with great exactness, just agree with the *beautiful* and *sublime* of Burke. For instance, the brisk and animated style, is of two sorts; for either it is produced by admiration, and is much employed in panegyric, as in the greater ode: or it is produced by a rapturous delight, and is employed in celebrating more sportively, as in the smaller ode. Now, in the Essay that I refer to, mirth is ranked with the sudden and tumultuous passions, and is separated from the beautiful. According to

this idea, it must seem that there have been odes on subjects better suited for elegy; and elegies on those which would have been better treated in odes.

Thus English poetry, which is furnished with measures somewhat in proportion to all the various kinds of poetry, falls easily into beautiful order, and forms a natural system which can alone be improved by the patience and caution of true taste, in listening to the critical suggestions of individuals. In ancient sculpture, in which such excellence was attained, it is well known how systematically, without being superstitiously systematic, and according to what a regular discrimination of characters, celestial, terrestrial, and infernal, the artist was used to proceed. Therefore, this nice arrangement in poetry I may naturally wish for, not only because attention to reason in art is always an earnest of progress in it, and argues a higher degree of civilization, as well as encreases our knowledge of the human mind; but because, by the help and guidance of method, it ENCOURAGES,

IN EVERY SORT OF POETRY, THE PRODUCTION OF MORE APPROPRIATE BEAUTIES. Yet as, after some time, habit would, perhaps, impart a charm to a particular measure of which it was not naturally possessed, I would, as great light has been thrown upon the inadequacy of metre always to ASSIST, so far extend my system, as to recommend giving it, in this manner, the additional importance of another object, namely, to DISTINGUISH.

It should be recollected here, that theory, as I have always applied it, tends to the preservation, and not the destruction, of established opinions.

I will add one word more upon the subject of architecture before I take my leave of it; and observe, that much less is wanting to render it as universally rational in every part as all the other fine arts, than I once had thought. Utility on the one hand, and variety, proportion, and propriety on the other, appear to me to be the most prominent principles of this art. Metaphysics *alone* might arrange these qualities differently; because

the first and the two last are ideas appertaining to *reason*; although the expression "*beautiful proportion*," may shew how perceptibly some of them mingle with *sentiment*. For example; according to the first, the proper degree of strength will be given to the different props of the building; according to the second, those props will be so distributed, that we shall be attracted by diversity of objects and appearances; according to the third and fourth, those objects and appearances will be divested of every thing disagreeable to the eye. By such principles we are enabled to form a judgment sufficiently accurate of a room or a column, without that magical and mysterious operation of taste that has been supposed. I think likewise, that Lord Kaims mentions too theoretically three sorts of columns as being founded in any thing but prescription; though we ought to keep within the extreme bounds of the three sorts, in respect to dimensions; very much, because they will, as objects, want importance if smaller, and distinctness and compactness if larger, and will upon the whole vary space with less effect.

Our idea of a summit and base, and of the character of *junction*, together with the less marked ornament of mouldings, may account for what is above as well as below the shaft, excepting the capital: it could not be supposed very different. But in the capital, in some instances, prescription may seem too much honoured.

An unsuccessful attempt has been lately made to produce a new order. The theory which makes pillars derive their origin from trees, has suggested a plan of producing a resemblance of trees to support a portico. The architect appears, in this, to have mistaken the nature and character of his art. However true Vitruvius's account of its origin may be, the present character of architecture is *regularity*; though that of a landscape, which it is improperly made to imitate, is *irregularity*. Nature indeed suggests to architecture, as well as to all the various arts that are concerned in the furniture of houses, those forms which are most familiar to us, but with the design that they may be entirely subservient to them.

If, therefore, we can by general reasoning, account better for the beauty of all other parts of architecture that are less marked by *particular manner*, than are a Corinthian or Ionic capital, and if we cannot assign a reason why, in these, some small variation should not take place; how shall we keep quite clear of the imputation of servility in our imitation of the Greeks and Romans? To this I answer, that the case is analogous to that of the British constitution. Alteration can only be desirable in the slightest degree; for great and distant effects, we may be satisfied by general principles. It is better to acquiesce in existing customs, than to produce monstrosity; provided that we at the same time render justice to philosophy, by supposing the present state of things variable, and that we make a general, possible, and voluntary improvement, our secret, and unaffected aim. Yet though a sort of *manner* will probably remain, and may even serve to check caprice, provided it be understood as variable, and that it be made to accord with new conceptions of beauty; it is

worthy of rational creatures rather to imitate the excellences, than the peculiarities of the ancients. I have perused the following observations favourable to this notion, in the interesting publication of Mr. Jackson of Exeter, called the Four Ages.—

" Architecture will not be slavishly held in Doric,
" Ionic, and Corinthian bonds, but formed on such
" aliquot parts as correct judgment, joined with
" elegant taste, shall find most proper." P. 93.

Also,

" To the circle, or portions of it, may be re-
" ferred the general forms in the Roman and Saxon
" architecture. From acute arches, or acute angles,
" may be derived the general forms of Gothic ar-
" chitecture." P. 69.

If this improvement may be gradually made, it should be undertaken only by an architect of the genius of Mr. James Wyatt; but I am disposed to think that the author's taste will not oblige him to regret, that *practice* in architecture has been ever left to itself. Like the English constitution, this art may be thought likely to be a sufferer

by any hasty and systematic attempts to improve it.

P. 63. l. 5.—In a gay and conversible company, there is nothing either in manner or in phrase that particularly attracts the attention. Let us suppose two persons to retire from such a company, on account of business which they are desirous of discoursing upon. They both immediately recall their thoughts from a variety of indifferent subjects, and fix them exclusively upon *one*. Any friend who should then accompany and overhear them, would resemble a frequenter of the theatres, who, after seeing half a comedy at one house, goes to see half a tragedy at the other, and having been employed in contemplating *manners*, goes where he can contemplate *serious action*. They employ now a more emphatic manner, in discoursing of that which separately interests them; and, if they are men of education, they express themselves, in order to enforce their meaning, in an eloquent and scholarly way, above the pitch of common conversation. The regular emphasis that they use, and

the choice language with which they speak, seem to me to be the foundation of metre and poetical diction in tragedy.

The marked cadence, the *ictus* of verse, seems to be a warning given by the poet, that he does not intend that we should fix our minds upon inferior objects in the course of the representation, but should wait for something striking which is finally to appear. Lillo will furnish an instance of this in his two plays of George Barnwell and the Fatal Curiosity; the former of which affects our feelings too strongly, by not diverting our attention from manners. The alloy of metre tempers, perhaps, in a due degree, the dolorous sentiments of the Fatal Curiosity. Pastoral poetry, it is true, has recourse to metre, and yet aims at representing manners full as much as action; but as it has a view beyond a simple representation of them, and wishes to create an enthusiastic admiration of the country, it is properly heightened by the melody of versification. As to any abstract reasoning with respect to the equal fitness of prose for comedy and tragedy,

on account of being *natural*; it must immediately appear to every one, whether an imitation is more exact, when the characters of our comic pieces express themselves in the daily language of the inhabitants of London, or when Cæsar and Alexander are made to do the same thing. But perhaps the most convincing argument in favour of prose in comedy, is that the *direct object* of comedy being the imitation of the manners of real life, we diminish its resources by preventing it from extending the resemblance to as many particulars as possible. Thus even the *material of imitation* should conspire to render comedy, (differently, in speaking by comparison, from tragedy,) a mirror, in which we simply notice the truth of its representation of objects; and prevent any strange or remarkable disposition of its parts from imposing a new and interrupting employment in *wonder*. These reflections suggest an argument in favour of giving old comedies as modern an air as we are able, in adapting them to the stage; for should it be done well (which is indeed seldom the case), they would be

more characteristic of the art. However, as we seldom meet with a superabundance of characteristic art in compositions, it is very excusable to wish to have the complement of interest made up by the exhibition of old *costumi*, which may gratify curiosity. But they do not *harmonize* with comedy, as they do with tragedy.

P. 66. l. 4.—As far as I have been able to judge of Schiller from his translated plays, he appears to me a bold, free, and natural painter of tragic manners, in the *idle* parts of tragedy, through a large portion of *some* of his works; but I do not find in him the pathos that those do by whom he seems to be classed with Euripides, and to be entitled, like him, to the appellation of *most tragic*. I doubt, whether even if any person were to extract from him, with the skill that Mrs. Montague has done from Shakspeare, he would be able to prove it by any example. May not the cursory reader be misled, partly by the *horrible*, which the German dramatist loves to display, and partly by what I would here remark, namely, a fault opposite to that of

which Horace is speaking; not indifference where grief is natural, but grief without a sufficient cause?

P. 66. l. 9.—As in Romeo and Juliet.

P. 67. l. 2.—The scene of tragedies is still generally laid in the same two quarters of the world; but in all parts of them, instead of in a few only.

P. 67. l. 5.—It is natural to prefer the most important subjects; such as those taken from our own annals; or others equally interesting to us, by being the most interesting to the world at large; on account of a rare greatness in the human character, or of events in the highest degree famous, or of the marked and repeated notices of literature and the fine arts. The exactness of the parallel does not consist here in the resemblance of the characters compared; but in this circumstance, that the total range of the modern drama is carefully marked out in the imitation, as that of the ancient drama is in the original.

P. 68. l. 5.—It is Locke's idea, that the application of our labour to land, gives us a property

in it. The sticklers, however, for novelty at the expense of good taste, might consistently seek, by some chemical process, to create soil; as thinking it would be then more valuable, however barren. Without doubt, the more there is of true originality the better; but whether it may not, in particular instances, be found connected with imitation, will be best judged by persons of taste and feeling. It may be found in style, and thus compensate for the servility of imitation in the thought; especially, where a talent for versification is united with a choice of expression. Though Virgil's *idleness* has prevented all his thoughts from being marked by invention, yet I infer, from his style and general powers, that even in invention of incidents he might have furnished a motive for Quintilian's assertion, of his being nearer the first than the third ancient epic.

Homer's work served to form the opinions of mankind after him; and adherence to those opinions has only shewed Virgil's attention to probability. Expression and metre may discover

originality; but are they not *thought*, as much as any thing else? Judgment may be discovered in the management of them, as well as sentiment. In short, it seems very desirable that writers should not attempt to seem ORIGINAL merely by becoming STRANGE.

P. 69. l. 3.—The venerable Prelate abovementioned happily illustrates these three rules, by the single example of Ben Jonson's *Cataline*.

P. 70. l. 2.—Boileau has a case exactly similar to that in Horace, furnished, luckily, by the annals of French poetry; but in an original work, where no parallelism was prescribed to him, it was almost going out of his way to allude to it; as I think we soon forget the boastful promise perceived, for instance, in the first line of Lucan. The opening of Addison's *Cato* does not long offend us, though he tells us of

"The great, the important day," &c.

and is far from the unequalled modesty noticed by Colman in the exordium of *Paradise Lost*.

This rule, however, may be connected in the reader's mind with what follows, and injoin us not to raise an expectation that we cannot satisfy; it may not be only meant in a literal sense, but chiefly tend to enforce Horace's precept concerning *order*. (see p. 57. l. 1). With all his merits, Milton seems to have about made ample amends for weaker interest in his narrative, by greater sublimity in his thoughts, than other poets.

P. 71. l. 3.—The rule, of confining the subject to a single event, is a most essential one; and Homer's peculiar merit was the inventing it.

The account given by Metastasio of his change of opinion on reading Tasso, may here be noticed. He was brought up among those Italian literati who had ranged themselves on the side of Ariosto, while those two poets had partizans so much opposed to each other. But he says, however, he cannot describe the sensations which he felt, when, having deigned to look into Tasso, he first saw presented to his view, by genius equal to Ariosto's, a single action, as in a picture, all the parts connected, and

conspiring to produce a single effect, in the manner of Homer. Among the reasons that he gives for preferring Tasso's artificial composition, is his *love of order.*

P. 71. l. 10.—Gibbon, with a proper caution in admitting principles, has started a doubt, whether the arrangement of epic composition recommended here, is the best calculated to give effect to its rules? The objection came naturally from an historian; yet it well deserves the consideration of the critic, how far his arguments have weight. Whether he would have shewn himself too much of the historian in modifying this rule, I cannot say; he might perhaps have too unwillingly allowed of some adherence to it, as "more varied and dramatic," which he admits it to be; for variety is the very essence of epic poetry. Great effects may surely be produced by it. The *Odyssey* and *Æneid* seem to have an advantage over the *Henriade* in this, that the narrator in both is made to produce more variety than in the other.

P. 72. l. 8.—I do not see either the great advantage or disadvantage of the epilogue. It may deserve respect as a custom, which, at the same time, were it to cease, would not deserve regret. The able critic need not, perhaps, waste his time in noticing it.

P. 75. l. 1.—I have said a great deal already in former works upon the subject of *action*, as having shewn it capable of ensuring the satisfaction of an audience through the whole piece, without the assistance of the *scene-shifter*. The drama (very differently from sculpture) ought to be considered as having never arrived at perfection among the Greeks. It is very natural that the smallest degree of action should have given content, accompanied with the pageantry and music which then supported it; that the sensible want of it should have afterwards induced one of the nations where the drama was cultivated, to resort to some sufficient means, such as change of scene, for producing an interest,—and hence discover the due rapidity of action; that another nation should have admired

the success, but could not, owing to its reverence for rules, benefit much from it, by an ordinary effort; that hence, Calsabigi should have first found nimself provided with a subject for dramatic criticism, in the difficult propriety of *coupling action with unity*; and that finally (as example may sometimes do what precept leaves incomplete) *the Battle of Eddington* has thrown on this subject what further light it stood in need of. I confess, as action and pathos are held to be its two principles, I considered that it even improved the drama, as well as threw light upon it, to render a third principle superfluous. It will be found, and many readers of poetry will be surprised at it, that the criticisms of the careless Dryden, in his essay, are the most favourable to my opinions; since he alone, I believe, of the critics of former times, *gives an idea* of a play circumscribed by all the rules, and yet producing variety by the number of characters, and quantity of incidents. He does this in speaking of some of the works of Ben Jonson; also in the verses to Motteux, on his tragedy of *Beauty in Distress*,

which I have never had the satisfaction of seeing, but of which he says,

" Ev'n Corneille might with envy see
" The alliance of his triple unity."

And,

" Let thy own Gauls condemn thee, if they dare,
" Contented to be *thinly regular*."

When Count Alfieri's tragedies first came out, accompanied by Calsabigi's Letter, I did not peruse the publication with the attention I have since paid to it. I could not, therefore, form a judgment how far the dramatist had realized the idea of tragedy, which this ingenious critic had formed. It will appear, that I readily and joyfully gave him credit for every improvement attributed to him by his friend; and that I conceived the example of the poet to have exactly tallied with the precept of the critic.

But though the Count writes in a style which real taste must be gratified by, as simple, eloquent, and energetic, whatever other fault it may find with it; and though he has made an improvement in the

drama by a greater diligence in presenting *single* pictures to the eye, (especially in the catastrophies) and banishing from the stage the character of the *confidante*; yet his tragedies do not present "a *series* "of *more* pictures," (to use his friend's expression) nor, in other words, display more *action*, than others have done. On the contrary, the French poets, whom the essay mentions as deficient in that respect, have, I believe, upon the whole, discovered more of it: and I attribute this to the advantage they had, of a permanent theatre to assist them; which the Count had not.

Since my tragedy was published, it has occurred to me, partly from observing its structure, that there is the plainest proof of what I here advance; and that an increase of the action must necessarily be attended by an increase in the number of scenes. For though action is produced by various means during the course of the same scene, yet this method cannot wholly be relied upon. I now discover that this was the only way by which Voltaire has in any respect increased the action of the French tragedies;

and I was surprised to find the scenes, even of his best plays, generally less numerous than those of any of Racine's: though he has properly applied himself to the easier method of producing effect, by speeches artificially broken. But a tragedy has never perhaps, except when curtailed by managers, had its full complement of *plot*; at least all its parts never have. I thought, however, there was no doubt, from the description given of them in the letter to the Count, that I should find it different in his tragedies; the scenes of which, as well as of all the principal ones existing, I had the curiosity to calculate; and can mention nearly what they are.

The *Œdipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles has twenty-one. *Samson Agonistes* fifteen. Corneille's best plays hardly amount to thirty scenes. Those of Voltaire, Racine, and Crebillon, have from thirty to forty; but I think the two latter of these contain the greatest number. *Elfrida* has twenty-four; but *Caractacus* has as many as the latter French tragedies. While we have violated the unity of place on our stage, we have not communicated

more action to our plays than served to exemplify the true tone of the drama. Had that been increased somewhat more, it would have sufficiently interested without any departure from the rule of that unity; but it would in every case have made a tragedy a greater undertaking than it has usually been. The favourite plays of Rowe and Otway, therefore, do not contain *many* more scenes than the French plays; and it is only in a few of our popular ones that the number approaches to fifty. I am not speaking here of old or historical plays, which may indeed be so long, that the scenes, however numerous, may be too much expanded to increase the action; but I speak merely of plays of an ordinary length, containing about fifteen hundred lines, more or less.

The scenes of the Count's plays never amount to so many as those in Corneille's; and, in general, they are about the same in number as those in *Elfrida*.

Voltaire boasts of the difficulty which he himself and the other French poets had surmounted, of

filling tragedies of the usual length with incidents, and yet being circumscribed, in their means, by the unities. But, when there is so much additional action that the scenes amount in number to between sixty and seventy, this particular difficulty is almost doubled.

We may infer from the above general reasoning, that the Greek and French plays might be adapted to the taste of an English audience, and become more truly dramatic, if they were reduced with judgment, in an inverse proportion, to the number of their scenes. For instance, the usual number of scenes in a tragedy of the common length, properly filled, being between sixty and seventy, the Greek play, which has twenty, (more or less,) might be reduced to about one-third of its present length; and the French play, being thirty-five, to nearly one half. And these plays so reduced, would, when represented, acquire that advantage of brilliant taste and perspicuity, which only Mason's plays, and some others of own own, could, by a similar process, be made to exhibit on the

stage. In printing plays, there are strong reasons for numbering the lines as well as the scenes, which I should be tempted to do in tragedies, either printed separately, or with poems in which the lines are numbered; for it is by the proportion which the former bears to the latter, that the degree of action may be determined. If the manager finds a play read decently, and perceives that the scenes are to the lines *nearly* as sixty to fifteen hundred, it will most probably be an animated spectacle. If the former bears a *much* larger proportion to the latter, the incidents would not have their true and natural play.

It may be asked, must not that style of writing, which is both marked with *a degree* of pathos, and not inattentive to character, and which, also, is rendered delightful to the reader by beautiful poetry, though dwelling upon subjects somewhat at length, in short, must not that *effusion of softness* which has so much prevailed, be banished finally from the tragic drama?—I answer, in expressing the same opinion as J. Warton, yes; for we should

like it only in its proper place. It is only the intenser pathos that has any thing *dramatic* in its character; and that which I here contend prevails too much in tragedy, however soothing, is only of an *elegiac* temper. Descriptive poetry is not more out of place in tragedy than elegiac; and both, when they prevail there, instance two principles of the human mind, which it will be worth while here to notice. One of these is a disposition discernible in poets, to take pleasure in the expression of thought by words, from which they may be charged, like those who are loquacious in conversation, with the love of hearing their own voices; and the other, that dislike of the labour of thought itself, which is common to them, and to people in every situation in life. These principles obviously tend to increase the quantity of declamation, and to diminish that of incident, in a tragedy. It may appear then that the use, if not the dignity of action, renders it in tragedy, what Demosthenes is reported to have said it was in oratory; not only the first, but the second, and the third quality.

Nor is acton of much less use in comedy; only here the plot ought to thicken, as it were casually and without forethought, in characters of whom it is not characteristic: for it seems, that neither deep stratagem, nor villany, ought to have place in it, without an adjunct of manners so striking, as to make it wholly subordinate. Mr. Murphy's play of *All in the Wrong*, which, excepting in the last act or two, is an extremely pleasing comedy, is said, in the *Biographia Dramatica*, to be one of our busiest plays; but I think it an excellent instance of this comic action; the incidents arising, not from any design in the characters, but, on the contrary, in spite of it and by mistake. The same may be said of Moliere's short play from which it is taken. For, as it has been justly observed, balconies and ladders are not properly introduced (at least in the way supposed) into comedy. Portraits, letters, and the furniture of a room, however, are much more closely allied to manners; and, a *series of comic pictures*, (such, for instance, as those of Hogarth,) must be very crouded, to be displeasing. By

such a mode of writing, all parties might consent to have the *spirit of farce* banished from genteel comedy; nor shall we be *obliged* to resort to it for scenes of lively mirth, on which we so much depend for the relaxation provided for us at the theatres.

There have appeared comedies, which, though they did not seem to aim at immortality, yet deserved the run they had, by adopting this method of increasing action. The action produced by a deep-laid plot, where the morality of the piece is unimpeachable, is never to be confounded with that arising from situations affectedly planned, and from a knowledge of the conduct of the theatre.

I would recommend *Bell's Theatre*, to promote this principle, for every dramatic collection both here and abroad. There is more of philosophy in those inverted commas than appears at first sight; and I wished, if possible, to see the custom of *curtailing* traced to so great an authority as Garrick, in his life lately written by one who was well qualified to place such subjects in their proper point of

view. One of the plainest advantages of action may be observed in the performance of plays. Having myself observed it there, I was led to remark elsewhere, that it is mere declamation that depends upon *the tone of an actor*; whereas incident or action employs his thoughts; and hence, the worst will often deliver himself pleasingly, because naturally.

I rather think, by attention to this principle, an improvement might take place in narrative works of imagination; and hints might likewise be afforded by it, to keep a greater number of small compositions closely to their purpose.

P. 75. l. 10.—The imitation here explains the rule of the poet, agreeably to the improved practice of the English stage. Boileau's rule, which is exactly that of the imitation, is,

"Soyez vif et pressé dans vos narrations."

But this improved practice had not shewn him the full extent of his own rule. I endeavoured carefully to attend to it in the second act and fifth scene of *the Battle of Eddington*, where the only descrip-

tion that it contains takes up no more than ten or eleven lines; and these were spoken in the interval of crossing the stage to the cottage. The danger is, lest we should not preserve, at one and the same time, the interests arising respectively, from the situation of the speaker, and from the matter of his speech; but, if these should be attended to, more liberty would be allowable. A dream, for instance, or any thing that impresses us strongly with the anticipation of its nature, prior to its developement, will bear to be related much more at length; which circumstance is agreeable to one of Diderot's best remarks, namely, that the spectators will be more affected by being previously led to the knowledge of an event, than by any surprise, for the sake of producing which it may be purposely concealed. This observation too is not to be applied merely to the drama.

P. 75. l. 11.—I am disposed to allow much of the praise that the play of *Cato* has ever received. It has indeed instanced the progress of the dramatic art, by showing a degree of action never known in any other country, united with regularity, elegant

language, and noble maxims; to which last, and not to a spirit of party, I attribute its original success upon the stage. I do not mean to extol it as equal to the plays of Shakspeare, but only to say, that it is, on many accounts, valuable to literature, and is well worthy of Addison.

P. 76. l. 6.—All that they do in Gray's *Bard* (where certainly the *costumi* are not painted from history, nor is the general idea *remarkable* for probability,) is to reduce it to a level with his other poems. If there are one or two images in his odes more magnified, or one or two phrases partaking more of a Grecian cast, than we should desire, yet what are these compared with the defective passages of almost all other poets? and the rest is absolute perfection. It points out, to all his poetical successors, the true character of lyric harmony.

If Gray's ode, in which the sentiments in general are exquisitely natural, deserves objection, what shall we say of the style of Petrarch's poetry, in which the whole series of thoughts is commonly in bad taste, so as to account for the prejudice conceived

against him by many persons, who are, upon the whole, of good judgment? I have somewhere seen an observation to this effect, that no exception ought to be taken to a mixture of wit or ingenious conceit with poetry, since both are equally successful efforts of the mind. But, surely, no two things are more uncongenial than wit and sentiment, and therefore none more calculated to destroy each other's effect, where fancy and not reason is predominant, as in an oration and a pamphlet; nor wit itself, as in some epigrams, and *genteel verses* of a modern character, which seem chiefly recommended by the event, or by the social spirit, which gave birth to them. But there are a few faultless poems, as well as some very good poetry, in Petrarch; and the striking character and history of the man, ensure to us the possibility of making an interesting selection from his works.

There are various ways, more or less absurd, according to the opinions of critics, in which poets may violate the laws of probability. Concerning *the Bard* of Gray, there appear to be some who

hold, that though Johnson resembles Rhymer in his condemnation of the great poet he criticizes, he resembles him also in the justness of a few remarks. In order to do justice therefore to these opinions, and see the forcible effect of the superstition on which this ode is founded, when probability is scrupulously observed, we may turn to the *Fatal Sisters*, in which the sentiments part naturally from the mind of the old poet; and therefore, give it an ease which would have added, more or less, to *the Bard*. But, *a final appeal always lies from the tribunal of art to the judges of genius, to decide upon the total excellence of a work.*

When this sort of improbability exists in the drama, it is in some degree lessened; for the poet does not, absolutely and in his own words, insinuate his belief in the fiction. So that we may imagine that he means to represent the ideas of another person. In the *Phedre* of Racine, where Hyppolite loses his life in consequence of the prayer of Thésée to Neptune, it will occur to the mind, that though a Pagan poet believed in the divinity and power of

Neptune, a Christian could not. But yet, as Racine did not affirm any thing himself, but made his characters to tell their own story, there is less of improbability in this; though, in a regular drama, even this degree of remoteness from truth is too much felt. It might, however, be allowed in such a composition as a masque or pantomime, in which every metamorphosis of the theatre might be exhibited to the satisfaction of the literary spectator, by a Medea, or an Armida: for, to the philosopher himself, the opinions, and even the errors of mankind, in different ages and countries, are a curious subject of contemplation.

Pope's machinery of the Sylphs and Gnomes, is, I think, the best instance existing of poetical probability in the *præternatural*. The merit is far from being negative; and there is an infinite beauty in the archness of the poet's intention. Not only *belief*, but *disbelief* has here its use; for had either every body, or nobody, believed in those familiar spirits, the fiction would have wanted animation, and the contrast between the weak

faith of himself, and of the "doubting wit" and the credulity of the "fair and innocent," would not have given force to the satire, nor equal beauty to the composition. Owing to the inferior aptitude, at the present day, of this machinery, the use of it seems improper; though it does not appear at all contrary to this sort of probability, to imagine new spirits consistent with prevailing notions.

It is not only the violation of historical truth that is said to transgress probability; in general, whatever is not imagined necessarily, or naturally, is said more or less to err against it. It is held by some, that the characters in a play should be supposed, throughout the whole of it, to appear in the same place; and to do no more than the time which elapses in the representation will allow them. Johnson and Lord Kaimes think otherwise, and that a change of scene may be made, and the supposed action continued for some length of time; arguing, that when this change is once made, it is not more difficult to imagine the second place represented, than the first. But this at least is certain,

that, if we should then transport ourselves in imagination back to the first, it is very possible for us to be struck with the absurdity of any place being supposed at once, the same and different. It is not less improbable, that the time and place should be varied between the acts; for we see, in a manner, through the curtain, as the ancients did through the drapery with which Timanthes, in his picture, covered the head of Agamemnon; and every thing, both what may be behind the curtain and what appears when it is drawn up, conspires to form one connected whole. These unities of time and place, though the least necessary, are the only ones that have to do with probability.

The action's passing before witnesses, is thought, by those who favour the chorus, to be more probable, and, I think, in one sense, justly. I do not go so far as to think it indispensable, or to such a degree probable that the contrary would shock us as absurd; especially as we are used to it; but I think it might produce a feebler effect, by not being marked with an additional characteristic cir-

cumstance, namely, its power of producing such and such sensations in the minds of spectators on the stage.

An improbability has been pointed out in the moral interference of the chorus, which is not owing to a defect of plan, but of execution. It has been observed, that the horror shewn by the physician and attendant during Lady Macbeth's dream, and the indignation of Faulconbridge at Hubert as the supposed murderer of Arthur, rather than the remarks of a chorus, resemble the two horses in Le Brun's picture, which by starting, heightened the terrific character of a scene. Now it is the object of a chorus to form precisely such situations as are here mentioned. A chorus ought to moralize, but not with more improbability of manner than Faulconbridge does here, or than Henry the Sixth does at the death of Cardinal Beaufort. If it should be doubtful whether morality is not too frequently inculcated by the fair chorus in *Elfrida*, yet in *Caractacus* Mason has made ample amends; for, every moral sentence

pronounced by a priest contributes to his priestly dignity; and the poet's art in managing this, leaves us nothing to desire. The endeavour at probability here has not only a negative effect, but also gives force to character.

I own I equally approve of the character of the Coryphæa in *Elfrida*, compared with that of the confidante, which the author observes that he might have made choice of. The chorus ought not to be considered as a group of important characters, any more than the lords, gentlemen, servants, &c. of Shakspeare, whose number, however great, never offends us. We consider them as in the back ground, and, as men, they are distinguished by no peculiar character; which, I think, I may say, was the case of the ancient Coryphæi. Besides, if we compare the characters, is there not still more probability that domestics should be found at the house of a great person than even a near relation? Many may be without such particular relations, but none can be unattended by domestics; likewise a shew of dependants marks their situation in society

with greater truth. To which we may add, that the appearance of the attendants in *Elfrida* improves the costumi, and represents in truer colours the manners of the age.

What I considered also a defect of probability in the chorus, and not, as I contend with respect to plan, but to execution, was pointed out by me, and purposely avoided at the same time in *the Battle of Eddington.* This may be explained, by comparing the assemblage of persons on a stage, with those in a concert-room. The company or band in the latter only converse in the usual manner when the music, which brought them together, has ceased; and thus every thing is perfectly natural. But if we suppose, that between the acts one of the company were to address another extemporaneously, in an air, at the further end of a bench; or that one musician were to accost another across the orchestra in the same manner, it would seem an evident absurdity. Yet such was the idea of the chorus that might be suggested by some part of every former choral play; though I maintain that the

principles of the Greek drama pointed at this proper distribution of "Chorus and Iambic," and therefore could not be improved. The Italian opera is comparatively irrational *in its plan*; since it may appear to represent a number of people assembled, who make no use of airs but to carry on conversation.

Thus, upon the whole, we may at least think just, the claim of equal *probability*, where the unities or chorus are adopted, as where they are not.

The want of this quality has been regretted in the *material of imitation*, because the Italians, in their operas, sing their parts; and the French, in their tragedies and principal comedies, employ rhyme.—These customs we object to as being unnatural; according to that usual disposition in man, to destroy, alter, or regulate, by a standard of abstract excellence. But in this, as in many other things, practice is at variance with theory; and those who are most conversant with foreign and ancient works of this sort, can best conceive, why they have not shocked, by an appearance of absurdity, the natives of those countries for whose amusement they were designed.

Burke might have accounted for the fact by saying, that there are *modifications* which render the same theory inapplicable, in some respects, to their drama, which serves to regulate our own.

Metastasio observes, that " an imitator, who does " not undertake to produce the exact truth, but only " to give as great a likeness as possible to *the material* " he employs, has perfectly fulfilled his promise, and " attained his end, when he has given it every thing " *of which his materials are capable*—and that it is " from ignorance of this nature of imitation that " arises the contemptuous judgment of those, who " treat the musical drama as improbable and absurd, " because the actors die with a song in their mouth." On this subject, however, we might more readily agree with him, if the same relation were preserved in the materials as in the objects of imitation. For instance, did the opera not vary more in the poetry and the music than just in proportion to the temper of mind of the speaker, and did they heighten or enforce every passion just in the proper degree, a refined taste would not be hurt at the want of truth

at present perceivable, in the relation between the different *materials of imitation.* In that case, whatever advantage there may be in music for expressing sentiments in a more delightful manner, would go much further towards compensating for the defects of a less natural mode of imitation. At present, there are only two vehicles for sentiment, which are perfectly dissimilar; namely, verse united with recitative, and lyric poetry set to a much more varied music; and to these two, all the passions must adapt themselves. In the French operas, continued rhyme gives a unity to pieces, in which, as in the Italian opera, dialogue only, and not song, is anywhere professed to be represented.

However capable music and metre should be of imitating truly, by the help of such unity or any other assistant principle, the different degrees of human passion, it will be impossible to preserve a *probable relation* between the parts of a drama, in which blank verse is mixed with prose; for one part will appear elevated above nature, while the rest is upon a level with it; as there is no way,

at least, of making verse and prose melt imperceptibly into one another. A fault has been remarked in Thomson's Tancred and Sigismunda, where a letter is read in prose. Yet still, though by prose the material *may seem* wrongly avowed, there is a natural reason for changing the material, which must have influenced Thomson. In proof of it, the French poets use sonnet metre to distinguish letters; and Shakspeare likewise, though probably without much deep reflection upon its fitness for tragedy, has used rhyme. But in the tragi-comedy, where the dialogue is not suspended for the perusal of any letter, still poetry is mixed with prose, and the relation produced between the parts of the work, by this change of the material, still more transgresses poetical probability. Nor is there any excuse for this, if we consider the power that blank verse has, by rejecting a variety of pauses, of expressing the simplest notions of the meanest citizen; as in the scene where Antony harangues the mob.

I must again here warn the reader, of my meaning; and suggest to him that, even in these cases, where

change cannot take place with obvious safety and advantage, theory ought not to be indulged; and, in general, the line which is the subject of this note will guard me from a suspicion, of desiring to confine poets within too narrow bounds. I allow that almost any rule may be dispensed with occasionally; though I have also said, in favour of these claims of propriety, that "*any part of a work may, in a great writer's hands, give the tone to the whole.*"

P. 76. l. 9.—As some late romances seem written almost purposely to exemplify a rule laid down at the beginning of this work, so also many compositions have been remarkably illustrative of this. The inferiority of effect in their catastrophies, to that of their preceding parts, will be recollected.

Other faults of composition may discover equal weakness, but none renders it more sensible than this failure of the narrative or dramatic poet in the unravelling of his plot; because human actions explain themselves clearly to our reason, by many particulars, as well as engage our attention; and here most strongly, through the passion of sympathy.

Helvetius makes *utility* (or, the benefit acknowledged by all from either useful or ornamental qualities) the sole test of mental excellence. But the pleasure arising from the observation of a writer's adequacy to his undertaking, or of difficulty, makes a part of that utility; and I believe where contrivance is only proportionate to sentiment, and therefore not too prominent, we universally esteem every work of art, according to the quantity of contrivance in it.

We may, therefore, be tempted to lay more stress than he does upon the different gradations of intellect. Besides, a wide association of ideas is a pledge for the possession of useful talents: the dancer whom he instances, had he been possessed of abilities, would have shown them in various ways, unconnected with his profession.

An acquaintance with literature, obtained without assistance by one of the lowest rank, is generally attributed to great strength of mind, when it may be owing chiefly to a literary turn. Where the contrary is the case, some great effort in poetry,

politics, or other lines, which has an influence upon the destiny of a country, may be found to distinguish him. I should think it might in general be ascribed equally to both; and must at least shew partial powers of combination, for which the passions would be in vain resorted to on Helvetius's principle. This description of people proves that education is not every thing, as he supposes. However, I would not be understood to infer from hence, that it is nothing.

Locke defines *liberty* to be *power*. With a still greater opposition of terms, this difficulty I am speaking of may be defined, *ease*. It is, in fact, ease in doing what is difficult to many. Accordingly, the expression "easy manners," may be used in opposite senses. Direct, and absolute difficulty, however, by which, according to Burke, the idea of labour elevates, differs from the opposite principles, as it effectually banishes the idea of ease.

P. 77. l. 6.—The consequence of the piece is at least twofold; for not only lyric poetry is ingrafted

upon tragedy, but music upon that; and a variety, characteristic of the theatre, is the consequence.

" The production of a drama," says Metastasio of the Italian opera, " in which all the fine arts " concur, is an extreme difficult enterprize." Let us consider how many of those *elegant arts*, which are (for the most part) the pride of genius, and which there must always be so great a demand for in a populous and civilized country, were united for the entertainment of an Athenian audience. In the dialogue, was the tragic art as understood by us; in the part of the chorus, lyric poetry, as well as the arts of music and of dancing; in the building where they sate, that of architecture; in its decorations that of sculpture; and on the stage, painting and the histrionic art.

Dancing, however, was introduced in a manner that must have taken from the faithfulness of the imitation, and to which, nothing but inveterate custom could have reconciled the audience. There is hence great room for improvement, should we admit it into our dramas. It might likewise be

considered, whether a more probable kind of dance, (as the Pyrrhic, or Salian, or such others) that would accord with the manners of the time and place where the event happened, may not be cautiously introduced, by favour of that obscurity in remote history, which, as Gray justly observes, "gives an unbounded "liberty to pure imagination and fiction."* Perhaps this art may be dispensed with in tragedy; but how friendly is the obscurity here mentioned to the probable introduction of a band of singers? and how much more so now than in the time of the Greeks, whose own annals were so simple; and who had not such a choice of stories, just sufficiently dark for the poet, in the annals of other countries?

I pleased myself, in a late work, with the idea of an example that might be given to shew the union of *all* the arts, in their several productions at the theatre; and which would appear like a sacrifice made to them of a hecatomb. This might not accord with the sentiments expressed by a

* Mem. Lett. XXVII. Sect. 4.

reverend writer, together with a wish very likely to be dictated by taste, for what he terms "the simplicity of the arts." That this simplicity is frequently injured by mixing them, I will allow; but we should not condemn the plan of an artist, when the fault may lie in the execution. To instance this in tragedy, because songs may be of too great length, and not be assistant to the interest of a drama, we should not, as by necessary consequence, condemn the chorus altogether; for songs may both be short, and assistant in develloping manners. It is the same with all the different parts of a work. One thought uncongenial with another, may not only, if kept down, allow of the effect of the latter, but if made the most of, may heighten it *by contrast.* Another objection here occurs, full as likely however to be dictated by the cant of the day, as by taste; which is, that the *manners of nature* in poetry, are preferable to the *manners of custom.* This should not be denied; but the good tragic writer will not therefore under-rate the *royal tragedy*, but will make the manners of custom, like a frame of due

brilliancy, add interest to his pictures of the manners of nature. He will make the same use of *sentiments*. It must be confessed, that the arts, by their union, often favour each other's failings; as where an indifferent drama is well got up and acted at the theatre, or where the words are set to good music. Yet I doubt whether this is not an advantage upon the whole; and had every piece fair play, it would certainly, I think, be so. Mason was prejudiced against modern music with a chorus, which in other respects he so much approved. In a letter of March 26, 1797, he writes to me thus:

"I will only say, that my ideas of the best species "of drama coincide very much with yours, in all "respects, except what relates to the intermixture "of music with tragedies, which are meant for re-"presentation, or what you call stage effect. But "with respect to music, you must understand me "to mean modern music; and I have delivered my "sentiments so fully concerning the present imper-"fect alliance between poetry and music, in my "fifth Essay on Cathedral Music, which I published

" about two years ago, that were I to say any thing " here on the subject, I should be obliged to " transcribe from my book." Therefore the stage effect of music, were it subordinate to poetry, he would have approved of.

Though I have not seen his own play of *Caractacus* acted, I should think any objections made to the music must be owing to two circumstances. *First*, its songs, like those of *Elfrida*, and the Greek plays, are much too long to please upon the English stage. Though songs are every day found rather to increase than diminish dramatic effect, yet, being prolonged, they must after a time, displease, through the same passion for variety by which they were able to strike at first. I have found nothing in the *Battle of Eddington* unacceptable to *an audience*, except the length of the chorusses; but though this was only when the music was confined to a single harp upon the stage, or was on a level with the acting in a barn; and though they are beyond comparison shorter than those I have mentioned; yet the opinion might be tenable, that it would

contribute to stage effect, to curtail them. *Secondly*, as a means of disposing of part of the song, a portion of the odes in Caractacus is recited. When I first observed this, after having remarked the dislike of the audience for any thing that it was not used to, I conceived that the representation of this play might have failed on that very account. But if the songs were to be reduced as well as the dialogue, (for instance, suppose all the stanzas of the song beginning at "*Hark! heard ye not*," *&c.* were to be omitted except the first, second, and last, which might be connected by altering a few letters, and putting the word, "*Haste*," instead of "*No*," at the beginning of the last) and if the dialogue itself were a little more reduced and broken, it might be far from unacceptable. These observations had been perused by Mason, when he wrote the letter from which I have just quoted.

This introduction of music into tragedies may be said possibly to interrupt the course of events, so as immediately to diminish the interest of each, as a whole; in which case, there is no doubt it ought not

to be admitted. But there are some parts of a tragedy, I think, where we may safely pronounce beforehand, that this cannot happen. Towards the beginning, for instance, where the attention is not yet, or hardly, awakened; or at the end, after the catastrophies of certain ones, where the joy wants to be completely expressed, might not music be aptly introduced? If I were to say, that there is an English choral tragedy, with songs confined to the *intermediate* parts, which was thought to derive acknowledged advantage from them by a critic by no means of the ancient school, it would surprise. And yet, if we judge rather by things than names, we shall find that the tragedy of *Theodosius* is such a one; and that the following is part of a critique of it, given in Baker's *Biographia Dramatica*. "It is "also *assisted* in the representation by several enter- "tainments of singing in the solemnity of church "music, composed by the celebrated Henry Purcell, "being the first he ever composed for the stage." Those who attend the theatres need not resort to deceased dramatists, to learn the degree of pleasure

that a British audience can receive from theatrical music, simply considered.

I am therefore induced, by these reflections, to address a query to the critics, whether the Greek play, *improved upon its own principles*, may not be that species of important serious drama, which when the subject allows of music, is alone necessary to be cultivated, either in France, Italy, or England; either where the piece is declaimed, or sung. Musical connoisseurs may consider, whether passion may not be as fully, for the purpose of music, expressed in avowed songs, as in the dialogue which forms the essence of the piece. In the mean time, if we inquire the opinion of professors in the art of music, we shall find that an eminent one, Dr. Burney, has, agreeably to this idea, described the sort of composition that would give effect to music. In Vol. I. p. 171, of his *History of Music*, he speaks favourably, and I think elsewhere more so, of the probable effect of tragedies set to music; and in Vol. IV. p. 13, he says, that narrative poetry is improper for songs, but that short effusions, such

as those exhibited *in the ancient tragedies*, or modern operas, are most fitted for them; and, that Voltaire's objection to them in the opera was ill-founded. Does it not follow, therefore, that a play upon the ancient model would have many qualities, if not every one, that is esteemed in the Italian opera? It is not to the purpose here to decide, whether tragedies ought to be spoken or sung; this must be regulated by the, perhaps variable, customs of different countries. Metastasio tells us, that his dramas were well received in whichever way they were acted; and I have myself, at Florence, been witness of the truth of this.

On the whole then, it may seem that the old dramatic *constitution* of Aristotle, together with the *religious establishment* of the Chorus, would serve as well as any subsequent dramatic plans which have been formed; tragedy being still naturally divided into those parts into which he divided them; namely, the fable, the manners, the language, the sentiments, the apparatus of the theatre, and the

P. 78. l. 3. All the following account is taken from Mr. Malone's edition of Shakspeare; in which, in the prefatory parts, this interesting information is given more at large.

P. 79. l. 7.—As fully described in the last volume of Dr. Burney's *History of Music.*

P. 80. l. 13.—This sort of drama I have before recommended, in case the want of time, of application, or of competence, should make it necessary. I then compared it to *a sketch.* The theatre, occasionally supplied by it, might remind us of the exhibition, in which one room is allotted to drawings. It is to be wished, however, that very bold sketches should be produced by the art of the dramatist.

I have mentioned only these modern productions as sketches; but the plays of Sophocles, and of course the other Greek tragedians, are imperfect pieces in the nature of sketches; only there appears in them an idea of general composition, and not, as in many of our dramas, a collection of exquisite parts, unscientifically or erroneously put together. The Greek, French, and English stage, have each

their peculiar advantages. In the first, there is an imposing display of dramatic merit in the many pieces even now remaining, where there are chorusses, discovering an outline of perfect tragedy; whereas modern times can produce very few of equal merit. The character of the French stage is, an exact propriety and adherence to rules calculated to give complete effect to the higher efforts of the art. The character of the English stage is, that intensity of *action*, and therefore more natural progress of fable, of which Shakspeare, by the very breach of rules, first exhibited an idea.

The discovery, however, being made, its advantage becomes now very consistent with an adherence to rules. Those who hold that the change from grave to gay in tragi-comedy is necessary in a drama, as forming the most natural picture of human life, upon the ground that happiness and misfortune alternately appear in it, should be cautious not to impose that restraint of rule upon poets to which they are the most ready to object. It will be acknowledged by them, that the grave and the

gay scenes, considered separately, ought not to exhibit the characters as *laughing and crying in a breath.* If it is possible then for poets to give the same effect to the whole as is by a contrary method given to the parts, these critics would at least rival the ancient ones, in cramping genius, by the prohibition of a style of writing which afforded them the means of doing so. They should consider, whether it may not be made consistent with the *essence* of that very variety which is sought. Nor should the ideal congruity, which is so acceptable to the man of letters, be hastily condemned as a false dramatic quality.

It is only on the principle, that if the drama deviates from rule it should be by means which interest an audience, that unity of action ought ever to be dispensed with. If Terence did well to form a single play of *two* plots of Menander, he would have done still better, like Jonson, always to fill his plays with a sufficient number of incidents, connected by *one* action.

Even the greater strictness, of adherence to the

less necessary unities of time and place, is commendable, when it does not restrain a poet. Where they are observed, there is a perpetual key to the story; the mind no longer having occasion to enter into itself to develope any part of it. Thus, if perspicuity is a quality of the least value in composisition, these unities are not, as Johnson represents them, superfluous, or rather a blemish; such as would be " the introduction of all the orders into a " citadel, when the principal beauty of a citadel is " to exclude the enemy:" a simile illustrating *simplicity* by an example of *ornament*. I have mentioned the advantage the players derive from *action*, when a drama is represented, saying, that mere declamation depends upon the tones of an actor: whereas incident employs his thoughts; and that hence the worst will often deliver himself pleasingly, because naturally. A similar advantage would result to them from these *unities*; *for, if the former would provide them with a subject of thought, the latter would equally assist them to comprehend it.*

P. 84. l. 1. Farce is esteemed by some, as

Gibbon and Marmontel, a vicious sort of composition, and not deserving the notice of the critic. I should however be inclined to go no further than the Bishop of Worcester, and only wish it banished from comedy. The spirited exaggerations of farce in the hands of an able writer, might expose absurdities in society with a very useful effect. I do not either know a more infallible maxim in criticism than that of Boileau:

"Un sonnet sans defaut vaut seul un long poëme."

So that in whatever manner we rank the different sorts of poetical compositions, the superior value of any is always owing to the writer. In ranking them, I think we must take their length as well as other circumstances, into consideration; for if the general strain of a long work is not poetical, still a great deal of valuable fancy must be displayed to vary and adorn it, as Lucretius and others may prove. So that supposing each poem to be of the usual proportions, and equally executed, I should rank them as follows:—epic poetry; tragedy; comedy; the

poems of middle size; lyric poetry; elegiac, or pastoral; satiric; imitative; sonnet; epigram. Lyric therefore is of inferior rank to epic poetry; and yet the smaller odes of Gray are much more read than Glover's poem, although it possesses merit. Satiric also is inferior to lyric or elegiac poetry; yet the satires of Pope have surely discovered more natural powers, than many attempts at a *truer* kind of poetry which have since been made.

P. 87. l. 1.—It is the fashion in these philosophising days to censure the English system of education, and to maintain, that the learned languages ought not to be taught, as they now are at our seminaries. But the following argument may convince us that they are not useless. An author can never be read to so great advantage as in his own language. We have therefore our choice, either to form our libraries of the best works in the original, that have been contributed by all ages and countries collectively, such as Homer, Demosthenes, Cicero, Milton, &c. or to take up with what could be produced by one particular age and country, as the

British Poets. But it would be natural to prefer the former; upon the same principle that we should look more for information from ten or a dozen of the most sensible men of all nations, than from the same number of the most sensible of any single nation.

P. 87. l. 7.—The humour of Beaumont and Fletcher, debased by obscenity, and obscured by the peculiarities of a former age, will not justify our concurrence in opinion with the wits of Charles the Second's reign; although it eclipses those, who without experiencing the latter disadvantage, have brought our stage into its present disgrace.

P. 89. l. 2.—On the effects of tragedy, a few words may not be improper here, before we finally take leave of the subject. Hume conceived, that the painful ideas which it presented were naturally unwelcome to the human mind; but that eloquence, harmony of numbers, and the artificial conduct of the fable, converted what *must* otherwise have given pain into a source of pleasure. The Bishop of Worcester objects to this theory, and is of the

same opinion with Burke, that we naturally receive delight in the contemplation of pain; for which he gives the following reason: "It seems as if Provi- "dence, in compassion to human feeling, had, to- "gether with our sorrows, infused a kind of balm "into the mind, to temper and qualify, as it were, "these bitter ingredients." He adds a stronger reason, which is nearly what Burke gives and thus expresses: "As our Creator has designed we should "be united by the bond of sympathy, he has "strengthened that bond by a proportionate delight, "and there most where our sympathy is most "wanted, in the distresses of others." Some late writers seem to have prescribed *perfect* deception in tragedy, which however, as it ought not to take place, was not maintained by those able critics. The idea, or the phantasm, but not the persuasion, of reality, seems, I think, to both to be truly tragic. Terror is sublime, but only "at certain distances, "and under certain modifications." Therefore a curious and interesting writer of the present day, and a genuine poet, who supposes the Bishop of

Worcester to have totally differed from him, may find that they have both entirely agreed, by a comparison of the other parts of his works with that in which it is held, that the sorrows of the great "take "faster hold of the imagination, and therefore im- "press the mind more strongly, than those of "others." Mr. Pye may hence possibly be led to reflect, that what arrests the progress of the imagination, may put the composition more in harmony, and may dispose the mind to dwell more upon the object, and receive a stronger impression from it by an *idea* of reality, than if, by pressing more closely upon us, it had so much apparent reality as to shock and repel us.

P. 89. l. 5.—In England this style of comedy was not silenced by law, but by having no other attractions for us than the humour of the only person who attempted it; who may be called the English Aristophanes. The loss of Foote's peculiar art can hardly be lamented as altogether a loss to nature, since, in the Socratic dialogue, (perfectly revived in our days by Hurd,) we may still be

gratified by a fictitious representation of real modern characters.

P. 91. l. 3.—The sect of Democritus (of which, however, Johnson certainly was not one) have wisely taken advantage of the example of Shakspeare; and they seem, by such means, to have almost silenced their opponents. The temptations by which its principles obtain adherents, may be easily conceived. "We have," (says a late writer, and one of the most celebrated of Germany, Lessing,) "a race of critics whose whole criticism consists "in rendering all criticism suspected. Genius! ge-"nius! they cry; genius is above rules: whatever "genius does, constitutes the rule. And thus they "flatter genius, I believe, in order that we should "be induced to take them for men of genius; yet "they shew plainly enough, that they have not a "spark of it, when they add in the same breath, "that rules oppress genius; as if genius suffered "itself to be oppressed by any thing; and what is "more, by something which originated from it." Yet, owing to this sect, it seems a task as disgraceful

to take the side of art in a critical discussion, as Johnson feared it was to compose a dictionary.

Why indeed, may not a tragedy, or a poem, have a right to be considered as a piece of mechanism, nearly as much as any other production of taste and fancy? We know, that in the art of Salvator Rosa, who is compared to Shakspeare, this is so much the case, that painters find an advantage in learning Brook Taylor's Principles of Perspective; nor has it ever been reckoned a proof of dullness in them, though criticism has by no means so *mechanical* an air as mathematics. But it may be said, ought we therefore to have poems henceforward written by mathematicians? I answer, even mathematicians may possibly please us, by the new means they acquire, as even tasteless architects sometimes can, by their knowledge of the fine forms of ancient architecture: and do we dislike to see beautiful parts, where a whole is barely tolerable? At the same time, we shall confine our admiration to that true poetical spirit, which is continually forming new combinations of what it knows; and if on the one

hand, it learns and is guided by rules, it also teaches, and guides critics by them, in return.

As Socrates was said to have blamed the philosophical distinction between utility and right, so I think lovers of literature may lament this critical separation of art and genius. It is, indeed, not to the least purpose: for if right, in the first case, and genius in the second case, are equally preferred by all, our disputes can be only concerning words. It has been held by a writer of merit, that "Dryden "was the greater genius, but Pope the better "artist." I must be sufficiently favourable to genius, when I contend, that this cannot be true, supposing their works the only test; and that, if Dryden, after a careful examination of them, is found to possess greater genius, he is, also, the greater artist. But I wish more credit to be given to that reflex genius which is employed in perfecting composition, and which every man of taste will distinguish from powers merely acquired, as easily as Addison did in the 160th Number of the Spectator, in which he ridicules the character of the *genius*, and

places first-rate efforts, whether depending on rules, or dispensing with them, in the same rank. Therefore the universality of what may be miscalled *dull art*, is creditable, and a secondary greatness of imagination ought not to be put upon a level with composition of the most masterly kind. Raphael, Titian, and Correggio, having distinguished themselves by drawing, colouring, and the chiaro scuro; the Carracci perceiving, like Milton, that "the force of "nature could no further go, &c." attempted to unite their excellences; and probably had they possessed equal powers they would have equally succeeded. If Michael Angelo is superior to Raphael, it must be owing to the few endowments of the former outweighing the various ones of the latter. The numerous excellences of Hyperides, were not, in the opinion of Longinus, of equal value with the single pre-eminent one of Demosthenes; but those of Cicero have been supposed no less the object of his praise; and the *number* of beauties in Plato appeared to him of importance, where their *value* was also superior. On the other hand, it would be very

consistent for the character alluded to by Addison, to get into the House of Commons, and to fancy, that simply by the *supplosio pedis*, or at least by an affected imitation of the emphatic oratory of the late Lord Chatham, he could eclipse the various talents of the best speakers of his time. Were Dryden then to be judged the greater genius, I should only allow Pope to be the more *useful* artist; as the portrait painter is the most useful painter. I confess at the same time, that in works of inferior poets I should lean much more to art, in this sense, than to what is sometimes called genius; and I should do this from an idea of the greater value of happy attempts to illustrate composition, than of such examples of fancy and eloquence as are not very rare. But there is less occasion to cry up genius as opposed to mere art, because it is the characteristic, and very admirable, faculty of taste, to detect its Proteus form under every disguise; and that often where it is lost to the declamatory foe of art; who may see it in passages like those which

"——— Split your ears asunder
"With gun, drum, trumpet, blunderbuss, and thunder;"

and miss it where it is evident to a refined sense.

P. 93. l. 13—If the superiority of Southern, in his line over Thomson, cannot be adduced as an example of this rule in all respects, those authors of a similar merit, will, on the whole, better exemplify the spirit of it, than any other deserving notice. We need not look so far, however, for perfect instances of the truth of Horace's observation. The frequent success of those who, with a knowledge of the theatre, exhibit pictures of human life in careless or common language, and who know how sometimes to throw in a popular sentiment; and the frequent failure of those literary men, who compose harmonious dramas, unassisted by energy of plot; at once explain and justify his meaning.

P. 95. l. 2.—The Bishop of Worcester traces the sentimental cast of the Greek tragedies to the schools of Athens. Is not that age exactly caricatured by the present? Voltaire, Helvetius, Diderot, and all that set, have filled most works of

imagination with the less dignified spirit of modern philanthrophy; so that we must own, this style is now carried quite far enough.

P. 95. l. 6.—As criticism, whether enlightened or not, has lately spoken slightingly of *style*, it would wish it to be explained, first, whether the dislike is to *natural* eloquence. If it is so, I do not know what list of authorities can be produced on the other side of the question, to counterbalance the opinions, among others, of the following superior men: first, of Julius Cæsar; who praises Terence so highly, allowing him *half* the merit of Menander, on account of mere purity of style: secondly, of Dryden; who, in preferring Milton to all the ancients, particularly mentions the magnificence of his expression: thirdly, of Gray; who says, that *expression* is always the great point with him; "I do "not mean," he adds, "the mere choice of words, "but the whole dress, fashion, and arrangement "of a thought." But lastly, we know, what Burke has said even of the power of *words*, in his Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful.

Secondly, if by *style*, is chiefly meant the *artificial* collocation of words, according to the rules of grammar and of propriety, and that when it is extended to less obvious and necessary cases, even there respect is due, rather than contempt; and we should not be too much prejudiced against it, although a deficiency in it may be made the subject of captious criticism.

P. 95. l. 9.—We have, however, rather cause for observation than complaint. It seems plain, that the mind runs greater hazard of being narrowed by the state of society in a large wealthy country; since the division of labour must necessarily give partial views of things to a large proportion of the people, although it gives to some individuals extraordinary advantages for improving their judgment. But, if the knowledge of the latter can be brought so to bear, as to make its effect more sensible and certain upon the minds of the former, (which may be expected from the gradual improvement of society) it may effectually banish that confusion in morals, which affords a pretext to the

discontented to slander the existing government, as well as the country. The love of gain inspired by commerce now gives energy to this chaotic principle; as must also that indiscreet rage for *utility*, which is acknowledged to have given rise to rash and ineffectual theories, in undertaking whatever is connected in sound with benevolence.

Horace, in the parallel passage, could not have intended to discredit economy, that prolific parent of virtues and of comforts.

P. 96. l. 7.—It would be desirable that standard works should be even more handsomely bound and printed, provided inferior works had less honourable attention paid to their outside. The bookseller who observes this scale, encourages the perusal of the best books by pointing them out, and therefore does service to literature. The greater part of books in a library ought to resemble tombstones and inscriptions, either plain, or but little ornamented; whereas the binding of the very best works should seem in the nature of magnificent marble monuments. The honour they would thus receive

would be somewhat similar to that which Alexander rendered to Homer, by preserving his own edition of that poet in the precious casket of Darius.

Indeed, as we see every day more and more, that fine books are bought and read with greater eagerness than others, we may be still more indulgent to frivolousness when connected with a taste which can hardly seem a vitiated one, and which it is possible to render useful. Considering therefore the power and energy which naturally support a bad cause, I can discern no reason why the friends of order, when they perceive some of their *corresponding* opponents applying for assistance to every passion of the human breast, and writing like Lentulus, "*operam sumas ab omnibus, etiam ab infimis,*" should yet not wish that the most religious and moral books should give employment to printers and engravers, in order to propagate safe principles.

P. 100. l. 10.—It is indeed a weighty undertaking. Though Tasso wrote his poem young, yet he gave the subject such consideration as to rank

deservedly among the first epic poets. Perhaps, however, even he, had he written later in life, and with an easy mind, might have added some true epic touches, which would not have injured it. The age of thirty has been thought better than an earlier, to compose tragedy; and might not forty and upwards, to the age in which Milton wrote his poems, be reckoned better than an earlier, for epic poetry? At that time of life, an extensive general knowledge must have been acquired to give proper variety to that species of composition; as it has been made to do ever since the time of Homer. Its character has appeared to be, *knowledge sublimated by fancy.*

This demand for variety seems to establish a difference between epic poetry and the drama; all the objects of the latter, as well as of many other species of poetry, being rendered subordinate to the principal one of the former, that of *enchanting the imagination.*

P. 100. l. 11.—We are now arrived at the passage upon which Calsabigi built his system; and I am persuaded, that we shall acquire a juster idea of

tragedy by comparing it with history-painting; to which I think it extremely similar. The same desire of interesting by the representation of an historical event, is the motive in both arts; and in both, I think, the *most tragic* style will not alone be thought interesting. Aristotle, accordingly, whose rules have provided for more future cases than it could have been conceived possible for the first critic to have done, has, in his eighteenth chapter, enumerated four different species of tragedy. I do not say what he thereby determines; but he suggests ideas that assist us in forming our conclusion. One thing must be confessed, namely, that *to affect* is the constant purpose of tragedy; but this, I contend, is done, whenever, its manner being dramatic, the action is not made to stand still in order to give origin to beauties; and then different beauties, it appears to me, may predominate and form its peculiar excellence. Indeed even tragedies wanting in rapidity of action have not always been preferred by good judges according to the dramatic cast of their subjects. The *Cid* of Corneille is, perhaps, of all his

plays, the most admired by many lovers of the drama; but the philosophical critic will prefer the *Cinna*, as a better specimen of the elevated character of his poetry. However, action may well be prescribed by a general rule; but must not many well-known scenes and speeches, marked with sublime sentiment, powerful eloquence, or curious manners, lose too much value, if we forbid the preponderance of all such ideas, in exciting terror and pity as do not of themselves relate to them? Shall we not likewise be confined to fewer subjects, and be prevented from bringing upon our stage many an event, which, assisted by a good plot, might alone fill the mind by its importance. The passage in Cicero, *de Oratore*, to which I have referred in the course of these notes, (p. 151) furnishes, I think, the true test of the character of an art, and also of the genuineness of every system, by prompting us to consider, whether their constituent parts would well combine into a whole, either for the advantage, instruction, or amusement of man. Tragedy, according to my description of it, would form such a rational and effective whole.

It is true, pathos being the quality *peculiar* to it should be always principally *in contemplation*, as the history painter is known to prefer a piteous or terrible subject, where the circumstances of a different historical event are not particularly favourable.

The President of the Royal Academy has painted two pictures, which from the prints taken of them are perhaps more known than any other of his works. One of these, is the death of General Wolfe; and the other, which is in my possession, is William Penn's treaty with the Indians. The former of these, in which the effect, besides that resulting from colouring and composition, is that produced by a pathetic subject, resembles a deep tragedy of Euripides. But the latter, which makes its impression upon us chiefly by the moral of the event represented, is esteemed, by Mr. West, the better of the two, and even his master-piece. I do not mean to say, the subject could, with as successful skill, be adapted to the theatre. However with the general idea of tragedy here described, and claiming greater latitude in the rare case of a new experiment, I may have

rightly, against some critics, defended my own play, in which the end of *exciting the passions* was not disavowed, but the means of *action* were purposely placed more in view. A careful attempt at *dramatic grouping* was made by it, in order to avoid not only the poet Carcinus's, error against probability, mentioned by Aristotle, but every fault resembling it; I must at present too beg to retract any concession I made to the same critics, in regard to the *slight manner* in which my *picture* was executed. It appears to me on reflection that such slightness best answered the end proposed; because my chief object was to direct an undisturbed attention to the *principles and nature of dramatic outline.*

As then the epic style of Michael Angelo, and the dramatic style of Raphael, in picturesque groupes, equally form genuine history pieces, so both the epic and dramatic beauties of Shakspeare, dramatically modified in tragedy, may be acknowledged to be by no means out of place.

History painting, suggests in a contemplation of it other sorts of dramatic compositions, which, though

not requiring to be extended beyond one or two acts, from a want of equal dignity and equal resources with comedy and tragedy, would yet be acquisitions to the stage. One is the mask, pantomime, or any such work as does not appeal to our reason, but raises wonder by exceeding the bounds of credibility. Another, is such as aims at representing some comic event, which either has once really existed, or which interests us as much as if it had by having been treated of in some favourite play or novel. Such subjects, I think, might be well confined to interludes.

But if history painting resorts so frequently to sacred subjects, why should not tragedy? Oratorios represented as sacred dramas, in the holidays, and reminding us of the ancient *mysteries*, would be no less favourable to decency and devotion, than as musical exhibitions.

The fine arts are very much connected, as far as respects the principle referred to by Horace. The seeming faults in poetry which he mentions, may be compared to those in music. Mason speaks of Harmony as,

" Permitting her unbridled course to rush
" Through dissonance to concord, sweetest then
" Even when expected harshest."

Yet music is much distinguished from the other arts; having been wrongly supposed to convey, like them, clear ideas of any thing as well as of sounds. To guard against such mistakes, let us remark further differences and points of resemblance in them. Poetry conveys clear ideas, but not, as Burke shews, by presenting *images* to the mind. Architecture presents these; but, in spite of D'Alembert's contrary opinion, has been justly denied to be an imitative art; and it is nearly the same thing with gardening. Painting, sculpture, and the histrionic art present them also, and these are imitative in the strictest sense; yet Burke considers obscurity as giving poetry an advantage over painting; and it must be still more assistant to music. In poetry there is no separate province allotted to architecture, like that of Canaletti in painting; which shews that it has little to do with the works of that art, or with their representations. But it has much more connection, when

descriptive, with the provinces of gardening and landscape painting, though not strictly as an imitative art. As such, however, through the drama, it has an equal connection with history painting, and also with sculpture, and the histrionic art. This latter has the exclusive privilege among the arts, of representing *motion.*

A peculiar privilege of architecture is the dignity of obvious utility; its peculiar disadvantage is the nature and unwieldy bulk of its works. A statue or a picture may be concealed, and our relatives of former ages, as Lord Orford observes, may travel up, gradually, by their portraits, from the parlour to the garret. A play or poem also, may be neglected and unnoticed; but if we suppose some noble situation in a city for a public building, and *the job* to be given to a person merely because he is *Mr. such a one*, the architect; here not only is a huge pile built, which daily disgusts the passengers, and gives occasion for ignorant foreigners to exult; but a spot is blocking up for centuries, where an honourable monument of public taste might have been erected.

There are, as I have already hinted, specific differences between gardening and landscape painting, with collateral advantages and disadvantages. The imitative skill of Gaspar Poussin recommends subjects in his pictures which we should not desire to contemplate from our windows. Mr. Whately has remarked the good effect of a heath in painting, where it is unattainable in a real landscape. On the other hand, he has remarked the obstacles to representing on canvas a down-hill prospect. These differences, therefore, ought to be attended to in gardening.

There is a sort of sculpture as capable as any of the highest style of composition, and of the portraiture of passions and manners, which, whatever peculiar disadvantages it may possess, has, in return, the exclusive and acknowledged merit of communicating to works of genius the additional value of a precious substance. I allude to the art, in which Mr. Nathaniel Marchant has excelled all the moderns, that of gem engraving.

The peculiar boast of music, is its ability of

enchanting and filling the mind by the simple force of sounds.

P. 102. l. 8.—It is not so easy, as it is flattering to ourselves, to point out in others the *damning* fault of *mediocrity*; as we must be able to conceive not only the prominent qualities of a work, but the total intelligence diffused through it. That common character among cavillers, *the modern genius*, who requires to be stimulated by a strain of terror, now *à-la-mode* at Gottingen, has not enough of what Burke calls "the delicate and refined play of imagi-"nation," to take in all the relations of the sublime and beautiful. It even seems, by a peculiarly just and edifying sentence, that Apollonius Rhodius, for whose *boastful* strictures Callimachus retorts on him in the words of my motto, that "on account of that "equal *mediocrity*, which every where prevails in "him, he was struck out of the list of good writers "by sovereign judges of merit." *

P. 103. l. 6.—It is less wonderful that Gibbon could amuse himself with "the bubble reputation,"

* Hurd's Notes on Horace.

and think it more than an equivalent for the checks which authors receive in the world; since he was not one of the tribe whose disadvantages are here pointed out. If a historian fails, there is an appearance of sense and utility in his pursuit, which is a sort of title of honour. Every poet, on the contrary, *has a nick-name*. Poetry however may be shewn to have its direct use, independant of its moral, if it is only on the principle that the whole collective mental energy of mankind, ought to be left to its own operation, like a vast machine which we should bestir ourselves to set a-going on its own principles, but never afterwards change any of its motions, because they were dissimilar.

I fear, if the different pursuits of men are set at variance with each other, and not allowed to be, as they naturally should be, friends, society will be made to resemble a house divided against itself; and that, we have the best authority for saying, "will not stand."

P. 105. l. 4.—This is a very good rule in order to induce a poet to keep his work a long time by

him: but I rather incline to wish it departed from, preparatively to every new edition; for it is more becoming for the author to consider his work as an attempt to please the public, than as a production designed only to show *his* style of composition. However, unless he can correct in some degree *con amore*, no delay is necessary; for correction may be injurious, and produce that elaborate style, that *hardness*, which though sometimes critics think they discover it in an easy finish, is not, where it really appears, to be commended.

We shall very likely find some, among the numberless diurnal critics, who having heard of the expression "coldly correct," and wanting the lights afforded by good taste, cannot conceive correctness separate from coldness. But it is obvious that incorrectness is not less capable of being produced in a cold mechanical manner, than correctness, and that consequently this prejudice must be carried to an absurd extreme by them. There is, however, a moderate degree of it, which is perfectly allowable; as there is of an opposite one, for composition

must surely be in danger from theoretic criticism, whenever the finished and unfinished styles are not equally countenanced. This moderate bias is suggested to us by Mr. Jackson of Exeter, where he observes that *the Bard* is less *sublime* than *Alexander's Feast*, from having more of the *modern taste*. Whether, from all the sources of sublimity together, it does not derive an equal portion of it, may perhaps be doubted; though the *composition* of the other may have, (to use Burke's language) more of the "infinity" of hasty sketches, and less of that "art and contrivance" which are far from tending of themselves, to elevate. Mr. Jackson, however, is sufficiently indulgent to the opposite bias towards correctness, managed and modified as it is by Gray; since he acknowledges its value, though he conceives it to deduct from sublimity. Of this quality, in the instance of Virgil, something has been already said. I shall only, in addition, observe the circumstance of the effect of his poetry having been attributed to his *knowledge of mathematics*. Yet in spite of this, how little could the verses of

the mere man of science rival his truth of design! *It is the correctness, not of the mathematician, but of the sculptor.*

P. 107. l. 2.—I have separated these two poets in the imitation. As Homer has been thought, by some modern philosophers, to have let slip "the "dogs of war" on the human race, a fuller description of Tyrtæus will at least show him, for the honour of poetry, to have been engaged in a more popular employment.

P. 107. l. 14.—That is to say that at least what I have called "inborn art," is a requisite of superior merit. Voltaire has translated one play of Calderon and the *Julius Cæsar* of Shakspeare, with a presumption peculiar to himself, in order to represent them as written with similar irregularity. He is obliged however, in making this comparison, to take notice of the greater good sense and contrivance of Shakspeare, which, in effect, is equivalent to affirming, that the two poets are alike, *only different.*

This play of Calderon does not badly exemplify the monster at the beginning of the poem; and

betrays a want of thought and art that must be displeasing to every one.

P. 109. l. 11.—It may be always known whether authors of one rank are more favoured by the public than those of another. In respect to the danger of praise we may observe, on the other hand, that the abuse of Horace's advice has been pointed out, and may be easily conceived. When a man commences author, praise may, have the advantage I have already hinted. Praise of the popular, unless we can give good reasons for it, usually makes us suspected of bidding for his support; yet a discountenance of works before reprinting has proved their authors capable of resisting an attack, is equally suspicious in another way.

P. 112. l. 2.—Johnson appears to me a great critic, though with a bounded taste. He is not an authority; but when he judges right, the depth of his reasoning, the force and frequent beauty of his style, and the ingenuity of his remarks, make us peruse him with a greater satisfaction than most critics. I therefore can allow J. Warton to have

more taste, or a surer judgment, without being a better critic. His *Essay on Pope* was a most interesting work; and his plan of forming it into notes on Pope, though executed with the carelessness of age, was a very good one. The greatest part of them ought to accompany the works of Pope to posterity. How valuable should we have thought similar notes on Horace and Juvenal, written by their cotemporaries! An erudition likewise, acknowledged by the erudite, though but a single quality in a critic, is an important one. Johnson had not only a strong, but a fine genius; and though he was less fit than Pope to "wander in fancy's maze," he might have made us rivals of the ancients in the highest sort of satire. Even he would not use words of six feet in poetry. Whether, besides those faults which have been *discovered* in his prose, others may not have been *imagined*, I shall not pretend to say.

Mason had many of the qualities of a critic, which Johnson wanted. He did not love to reason and investigate; but the talent *ponere totum*, the result of judgment, is very discernible in his criticisms.

He can generally be relied on as an authority. I mention him among critics, not only on account of this caution, but because, owing to the subjects, arrangement, or critical allusions, of his works, taste appears to me to be their predominant quality.

In times when the mind is warped by the prevalence of theory, and every deceased author of eminence therefore is either " god or devil" with many readers of their works, it may not be useless to express a candid opinion of the relative merits of some.

P. 113. l. 13.—The Bishop of Worcester shows by his note, that he would consider the unsocial pedantry here imputed to Empedocles, as setting a very different example from the delicacy of sentiment, which, united with the peculiarity of Petrarch's situation, drove him, " fallen on evil days," into studious retirement.

P. 115. l. 8.—We may imagine that, to one who would

" Rejudge the past, and dignify disgrace,"

it might suggest another *historic doubt*, whether Empedocles, who was both a naturalist and a poet,

might not, in the former character, like many a philosopher, have ventured somewhat too near the crater of a burning mountain, than like no other person whatever, have performed the feat here recorded of him.

The literary veteran who adopted this plan of history, is among those whom the public has lost within these few years, and has with reason regretted. He may not be comparable to Johnson, whom he too freely criticizes; but however secondary the importance of some of his works, they have usually that value which always attaches to historical truth, as also what is conferred by taste, with a competent elegance of style; and upon the whole (which is not saying very little) he may well rank with his own *royal and noble authors*.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM

PETRARCH,

&c.

From a model after an original picture

in the Piombino palace at Rome.

Published 1 March 1801 by J. Hatchard 173 Piccadilly

PETRARCH.

PART I.

POEMS DURING THE LIFE OF LAURA.

SONNET.

Twas that dim day* the Sun's relenting rays,
In pity of a God, their splendour veil'd,
When with firm chains all unaware assail'd,
Thy glances bound me, too intent to gaze.
No risk I dreaded from the treacherous ways

* The day is recorded as being April 6th, 1327. This concetto is imitated at the opening of Milton's fine ode on Christmas day, and by no means rendered less of a concetto.

Of Love, bright fair, and arms that oft prevail'd,
Till, unsuspecting victim, I bewail'd,
Too late, the common doom, with vain amaze.
Love found me a disarm'd and helpless foe,
Swift at my heart directing, through these eyes,
The shaft, that opes their sluices sad for life.
Nor was it valiant, sure, by mean surprise
My feeble and unguarded power to o'erthrow,
Yet from thy front retire, prepared for strife.

SONNET

TO STEPHEN COLONNA THE ELDER.

O GLORIOUS Column,* by whose strength are stay'd
Our ardent hopes, and Latium's name divine;
That from thy path, and Conduct's certain line,
Jove's rage ne'er daunted, nor his storms dismay'd;

* Alluding to the Italian word *Colonna*.

No palace, theatre or porch's shade,*
But in their stead, a fir, a beech, a pine,
O'er the green turf, and heights, whose charms
adjoin,
And mounting, or descending, poets aid,
From earth to heaven here lift the ravish'd mind:
And the sweet nightingale, in thickest grove
That pours each eve her ditty, and complains,
O'ercomes the heart with thoughts of saddest love.
Only Joy's measure is by thee confined,
My friend, whom envious Destiny detains.

* Petrarch, when this nobleman was at Avignon, had eagerly made inquiries of him, to which this alludes, concerning the remains of ancient magnificence at Rome, which his patriotism made so interesting to him.

SONNET*

ON PLANTING A LAUREL, NEAR A RIVULET, IN HONOUR OF LAURA, IN A SPOT WHICH SHE FREQUENTED.

If yet thou glow'st, Apollo, with that fire
Which once in Thessaly thy breast inflamed,
And, for the bright-hair'd beauty's charms so famed,
Hast not, at length, forgotten thy desire;
From the cold frosts, and wint'ry winds, whose ire
Is, when thou hidest thy majesty, proclaim'd,
Protect the sacred plant, with reverence named,
By which I too, ensnared, to love aspire.
And, for that amorous hope which sooth'd of old
Thy pain, and made thy life less sadly pass,

* The resemblance, in their names, of the laurel tree and his mistress, had so struck the imagination of Petrarch, that, in his poems, Daphne, Laura, and the laurel, become synonymous terms.

From this unhealthy moisture purge the air.
Soon with what wonder shall we both behold
Her circling arms, extended o'er the grass,
And gaily shading our much-honour'd fair!

BALLAD.

I SEE the obtrusive veil (be it confess'd!)
Alike in sunshine and in shade,
Obdurate fair one, carefully display'd,
Prove, thou well know'st, the secrets of my breast.
Ere yet the oppressive passion was reveal'd,
That daily dooms me to Affliction's load,
Relenting Pity soften'd in thy look;
But, when thy power my agitation shew'd
Those locks admired were suddenly conceal'd,
And glances interrupted from me took
Relief, whose absence I can badly brook.
Thus am I govern'd by a veil,
That from me, whether cold or heat assail,
Hides the bright eyes that have so often bless'd.

SONNET.

WHENE'ER, among the comrades of the dame,
Bright Love approaches in her beauteous mien,
As much as each beneath her charms are seen,
Swells my desire, and grows the excited flame.
The place, and hour, when Excellence first came
To lift my view, recall'd, I bless the scene;
And say, "my soul, that such thy boast has been,
"To the kind gods unmeasured thanks proclaim.
"From her the love-created Fancies spring,
"That point to Heaven's perfection, and calm joy;
"Not to the unworthy cares that man employ:
"From her derived, do the pure raptures buoy
"Thy thought, and lift thee to the immortal ring;
"Which yet I seek, on Hope's aspiring wing."

SESTINA.*

To every animal that dwells on *earth*,
Unless those few that dread the blazing sun,
Fate has allotted, for their toil, the day;
But, when the heavens are lighted by the stars,
Some hie to sheds for shelter, some to woods,
There to enjoy their wish'd repose till *morn*.

And I, as soon as I behold the *morn*
Dispersing round the dews and shades o'er earth,
And calling forth the beasts from all the woods,
Perceive no cheerful influence in the sun;
Then, when I flaming see the nightly stars,
I only weep, and languish for the day.

* The lines of the Sestina terminate, in every stanza, in the same words, of *two* syllables; but, from the structure of an Italian verse, those words seem properly rendered by a monosyllable in English.

When dusky evening then succeeds the *day*,
Within this land, and makes another's morn,
Pensive I gaze at the relentless stars,
That fashion'd me from much too feeling earth;
And curse the day I first beheld the sun,
By which I seem a savage in the woods.

I truly think no beast has, in the *woods*,
Appear'd so terrible by night or day,
As she I sigh for, where'er shines the sun;
Nor do I pause for evening, or for morn;
For though I am a mortal piece of earth,
The strong desire I feel is from the stars.

Before I may ascend to you, bright *stars*,
Or seek below the lover's myrtle woods,
Leaving my body, then but mouldering earth,
May I obtain her pity! Joy, one day,
Will balance years of pain, and ere the morn,
Content, announced me by the setting sun.

With her first witness'd by the setting *sun*,

Might I remain, and only see the stars
During one night, and might it ne'er be morn;
Nor might she, to that honour of the woods
Transform'd, escape my love, as on that day,
When Phœbus follow'd her below on earth.

But deep in *earth*, my coffin from the *woods*
Brought, I should lie, and *day* exhibit *stars*,
Ere such a glorious *morn* display the *sun*.

SONNET

ON SENDING TO A FRIEND A PAIR OF PIGEONS, WHICH, BEING THEN FREQUENTLY EMPLOYED IN FIELD SPORTS, HE HAD CAUGHT WITH NETS.

FREE, at the foot of that well-peopled hill,*
On which the unrivall'd beauty had been born,
Ere him who sends us, captive and forlorn,

* Where Avignon was situated.

She troubled, waking oft, and weeping still,
We pass'd our lives, and wing'd the air at will;
Nor less had any creature cause to scorn,
Its fate, nor any sign appear'd, to warn
Us, thoughtless wretches, of approaching ill.
But, after those enjoyments we possess'd,
Yet, at the rueful pass we have attain'd,
Awaiting Death, we still on Hope can rest:
By the sweet prospect of revenge sustain'd,
We see our captor pining too, oppress'd
By Love, and by more fearful fetters chain'd.

SONNET

TRAVELLING THROUGH THE FOREST OF ARDEN.

Through this inhospitable, shaggy wild,
Even terrible to those begirt with arms,
I pass securely, whom my Sun alarms
Alone, Love's dreaded influence beaming mild:

And sing, in self-command a very child,
Her whom my fancy, blind to threaten'd harms,
Sees, with her comrades fair, supreme in charms.
The firs and beeches, by its force beguiled,
I think her train; I hear her, when I hear
The branches rustle, the fond birds complain,
And rapid rivulets murmur through the mead.
Grateful with gloom and silence might appear
These lonely woods, and soothing to my pain,
Did I not now my Sun's glad presence need.

SONNET

The loneliest fields, a pensive wanderer grown,
I tread, with solitary steps and slow,
And round my anxious eyes, inquiring, throw,
The tracks of men to avoid, wherever shewn.
No surer means are to Invention known
From looks too curious to conceal my woe,
For in my secret breast what passions glow
Each gesture tells, and what I still bemoan.

Thus mountains now, methinks, and silent plains,
Thus woods, thus rivers, learn that rueful state,
Which I from every living witness hide:
Yet neither wild nor rugged path restrains
Intrusive Love, that, sent by cruel Fate,
Still walks, and still discourses, by my side.

SONNET

ON THE RECOVERY OF LAURA FROM A DANGEROUS ILLNESS.

Now was the star of Venus in the east
Seen high, and that which could so jealous make
Imperial Juno, view'd its place to take
Among the northern fires, admired not least.
The industrious housewise, timely slumber ceased,
Her dress scarce huddled on, was bent to rake
The smother'd embers; nor less soon awake,
The Lover on his pleasing pain to feast;
When my fair mistress, in her sad estate,

Enter'd my thoughts; not by the accustom'd way,
Which Sleep kept closed, as Sorrow had bedew'd;
(How changed, alas, her looks!) and seem'd to say,
"Take heart, be hopeful of a better fate:
"These eyes by you will, as they wont, be view'd."

ODE

TO STEPHEN COLONNA THE YOUNGER, MADE SENATOR OF ROME FOR FIVE YEARS.*

Heroic spirit, that thy seat on high
Hast left, to animate terrestrial clay,
And form a mortal, prudent, bold, and wise;
Since thou hast now attain'd the sovereign sway,
And canst in Rome the arts of empire try,
To bid it to its ancient honour rise,
On thee, I call; for, save in thee, my eyes

* Before the publication of the Memoires de Petrarque, it was supposed most generally to be addressed to Rienzi, the famous tribune.

Perceive not Virtue (which from earth seems flown)
Nor even the very shame that Vice inspires.
Howe'er now Italy a change desires,
Or seeks, her state seems to herself unknown,
Decrepit, dull, and torpid grown.
Is she in everlasting slumber bound?
O might my vigour lift her from the ground!

No; she will never, from her slumber deep,
Grasp'd by her hair, at such a warning voice,
Be roused: such heaviness ensures her doom!
But doubtless 'tis by Heaven's peculiar choice
That thou, whose efforts can dispel her sleep,
Hast, in thy care, her head, our honour'd Rome.
Firm in those venerable locks presume
To plant thy hand, that now dishevell'd * trail,
Till the raised sluggard on her feet be set.
I, that her sufferings day and night regret,
Hope only by thy labours to prevail.
If Mars's people do not fail

* This alludes to the disunited state of Rome.

Their elevated aims revived to see,
That high advantage will be due to thee.

Those ancient walls, the pilgrim yet beholds
With pleasure and with dread, when times long past,
And many splendid triumphs he revolves;
With tombs of those, whose actions will outlast
Even what man's perishable dust infolds,
Famed till the fabric of the world dissolves;
And whate'er works one ruin now involves
Warn thee Rome's ancient glories to renew.
Just Brutus, warlike Scipios, when, though rare,
One rules, who makes it, in these days, his care,
What joy shall, in the shades, descend to you!
How, ravish'd at the tidings new,
Will old Fabricius triumph, and exclaim,
" My Rome again shall spread abroad its fame!"

And if ethereal spirits can endure
Their thoughts from scenes celestial to estrange,
And meditate on what is done below;

Grieved at long civil feuds, from thee a change
They now expect, while, ever insecure,
To worship Heaven none unmolested go;
And places, once so sacred, dwellings grow
Of violence, and seem but dens of thieves.
There entrance only is refused the good;
And, where the shrines and altars lately stood
So rich, the world new horrors plann'd perceives,
He scarce, who knew the past, believes,
And bells excite to arms, that only hung
Aloft, the signal of Devotion, rung.

The weeping Female Train, with clamour loud,
Weak Age and Childhood, whom the light of day
Grieves, and whate'er abhorr'd Existence shews;
Religious Brothers, white, and black, and gray;
And all, however by Affliction bow'd,
Call out "O mighty Chief, relieve our woes!"
The wretches such unnumber'd harms disclose,
As in a ruthless Hannibal, would wake
Pity for hated Rome: and, if we search
Around the fire that wraps the holy church,

Soon shall we see the fuel whence to take,
And how the blaze less powerful make;
The blaze of Passion, that so wide extends:
Do this; Heaven's blessing on the deed attends.

Though bears, wolves, lions, eagles, serpents, all
Should try against a marble Column* born,
To shake it, ill their strength the attempt would suit.
That senseless rage see Rome afflicted mourn,
And on thy active virtue loudly call,
Poor plants, with ardour, from the soil to root,
Bless'd, in a thousand years, with little fruit.
Those lofty spirits are not now beheld,
That made her glorious, as she was before:
O race, whose breasts with anger I deplore,
Are now against so great a mother swell'd!
But thou, her father, husband, held,

* The bears mean the Orsini family, from the word Orso. The rest are supposed to mean those families who united with them, in opposition to the Column, Colonna.

Thy succour bring; for such good deeds, by one
She claims alike,* will now be left undone.

Seldom it happens that, to high designs
Propitious, Fortune cares the just reward
Of worth to allot, as she now seeks to do:
But favours with her rule that ill accord,
Scarce granted thee, to pardon so inclines,
I see her wrongs with patience, though not few.
The worthies of whom History boasts, ne'er knew
A road so clear to everliving Fame;
For thou preparest the Monarchy's return
To former greatness, if I well discern
True merit, kindled by its generous aim.
How will this praise exalt thy name,
" Others, its youth assisting, raised the state;
" He, while it totter'd beneath age's weight?"

* " The Pope," as Gesualdo explains in his note, " who lives at Avignon, attentive to the spiritual go- " vernment, and not the republic, and is quite given up " to luxury, indifferent to the fate of Rome and Italy."

On the Tarpeian hill thou wilt behold,
My song, a Chief, all Italy esteems,
Of others' good more thoughtful than his own.
Tell him, that one, to whom he is unknown,
Save by applauding Fame, yet worthiest seems,
Thus says, " with tears, pour'd forth in streams
" Through faded eyes, on thee does Rome, from all
" Her seven famed hills for just compassion call."

MADRIGAL.*

A FOREIGN beauty touch'd my heart, whose face,
Love's genuine badge, declared her of his train.
(All others seem'd less worthy of her place.)
Whom following along the verdant grass,
These words I caught, at distance utter'd plain.
" Thou with lost labour through the wood wilt pass

* Supposed the description of a warning, which he thinks effectual, from his confessor, father Dennis; who wrote to him, that it was unbecoming to lose his time, by the consequences of his passion.

" On this pursuit." Then in the shade I stood
Of a tall beech, and mused awhile, till soon
I saw around what dangers in the wood
Beset me, and return'd content at noon.*

SONNET.†

ON A MINIATURE OF LAURA, PAINTED FOR PETRARCH BY SIMON, A DICIPLE OF GIOTTO.

That master, Policletus, and the rest
Whom History boasts, exerting all their art
A thousand years, could only shew a part
Of the unrivall'd grace that fires my breast;
But surely, Simon, in the regions bless'd,

* This allegory had been used by Dante. He means by Noon, the age of thirty-five years, as being half the age of a man, and likewise his own at that time.

† This and the following sonnet, are those which Vasari speaks of, as a modern connoisseur would of Pope's epistle to Jervis; or, in other words, as a compliment paid by an eminent poet to an indifferent artist.

Had seen the beauteous sovereign of my heart,
And thus, among the sons of earth, we start
To see her lineaments so fair express'd.
This face is of some being in the sky,
A semblance true; not one, like us, whose soul
Is veil'd by cumbrous flesh from every eye:
My friend judged well, who could not form a whole
So various, where, less aided than on high,
The impediments of earth his sight control.

SONNET.

THE SAME SUBJECT.

When Simon first the precious work design'd,
That proved the wonders of his art for me,
O that his pencil could have bid me see
The senseless form endued with voice and mind!
My sighs less frequent I had joy'd to find,
Bereft of pleasure now, by Fate's decree;
For, in this picture, cruel though she be,

She bears a countenance to peace inclined:
And when all wildly I address my speech
To her, she seems to listen without pain,
And grant due pity, as I then beseech.
How might, Pigmalion, the reflection teach
To thee content, who couldst for ever gain
What I, one moment, wish within my reach!

SONNET.

Sennuccio, let me tell thee how, kind friend,
I pass my days, and what a life is mine:
I burn as I was wont, condemn'd to pine
For Laura, and with Passion's force contend;
Here proud, here lowly, have I seen her bend
On me her eyes; to harshness now incline,
And now to pity; and her looks divine,
Joyful or sad, to scorn or kindness tend.
Here did she sweetly sing; here sate, and here
Was seen to turn, or sudden stop: here thrill'd
My soul with the bewitching look she gave:

Here spoke, or smiled, as I stood wondering near;
Or changed her air—with such reflections fill'd,
Love day and night torments his hapless slave.

SONNET.

HIS REASON FOR LOVING LAURA AT THIRTY, WHEN HER BEAUTY WAS IMPAIRED.

Her golden locks were in the wind display'd,
That blew them round a thousand graceful ways,
While in her eyes an undiminish'd blaze
Still beam'd; though now by Time less vivid made;
And pity, as I thought, her looks display'd,
But know not if, as true, it tempted praise:
That Youth then fired my bosom, can it raise
In any wonder, with such fuel's aid?
'Twas not the motion of a mortal's form,
But something heavenly, and her speech's sound
Unlike to what we hear on earth below.
'Twas some pure spirit; a bright sun, around

Appearing then to beam its influence warm;
Nor can it heal the wound to unstring the bow.*

SONNET.

ON PETRARCH'S PICKING UP A GLOVE LAURA HAD DROPPED AT AN ASSEMBLY, AND WHICH SHE HASTILY RECOVERED FROM HIM.

O BEAUTEOUS hand, that robb'st me of my heart,
Shewing whate'er I prize in narrow space;
To form which, Nature in her work would place,
For her own fame, and Heaven's, her utmost art:
Clear, pearly whiteness that, o'er every part

* This line was chosen, a century afterwards, for his motto, by a king of Naples, on his queen's death.

" Le roi Rène apres la mort d'Isabeau de Lorraine, " sa première femme, prit cette devise:

" Un arc turquois avec la corde rompue, et le dernier " vers de ce sonnet:

" Piaga per allentar d'arco non sana."

MEM. DE PETRARQUE.

Conspicuous, givest to killing fingers grace,
Know, Love consents my eager eyes should trace
Beauties late hid, a destined joy to impart.
Thou snowy, fair embroider'd, graceful glove,
Yet mourn'd, where ivory shines and roses glow,
Too oft, who could an equal prize divine?
Thus might the veil become a spoil of Love!
O strange vicissitude of things below,
I have possess'd the treasure—yet resign.

SONNET.

A SOLITARY life I ever sought,
(The fields, the woods, and rivers know it well,)
Flying those sordid souls, their stars compel
To lose the path by Heaven and Virtue taught:
And had my former project come to aught,
Far from soft Tuscan* air, I now should dwell

* About the time of Petrarch's birth, his family was driven from Florence by an army of the French under

Where the wild hills around my river swell,
Sorga,* that nurses sad poetic thought;
But Fortune, always adverse to my views,
Keeps me where, uninspired, I sing, and grieve
To see my treasure, in the mire is thrown.†
Yet late my hand was destined not to lose
Its labour, but its full‡ reward receive,
By Love, and by myself, and Laura, known.

Philip le Bel, by whom it was proscribed, as well as, among many others, the great Dante. Petrarch, at seven months old, was carried across the Arno, as Camilla was carried by Metabus, according to Virgil.

* He had by this time, as is here seen, established himself at Vaucluse; the fountain of which has been poetically described on the spot by Sir William Jones, in his Elegy on Laura. See his Poems.

† Meaning Laura in the vicious city of Avignon.

‡ Alla man' ond' io scrivo, è fatta amica
A questa volta: e non è forse indegno:
Amor sel vide, e sal Madonna, ed io.

I have translated this unintelligible passage conformably to the idea of its general meaning, suggested by the author of the Memoires de Petrarque; supposing that Laura had condescended to shake hands with her lover.

Drawn by T. Stothard R.A.

Engraved by J. Neagle.

——Ella si sedea
Humile in tanta Gloria,
Coverta già dell amoroso nembo.

Petrarca Canz. XIV.

Published March 1.1810. by J. Harchard 23 Piccadilly

ODE*

WRITTEN AT LAURA'S FAVOURITE FOUNTAIN.

LIMPID, cool, untainted spring,
Where her limbs she often laved,

* The author of the Memoires argues very well to prove, that it was not the fountain of Vaucluse, as it was thought probably at the time Sir William Jones translated the ode with this opinion. As this, therefore, was, I believe, in his youth, it gives me a better excuse for translating it after him, as supposing in some few parts, however beautiful the rest, a want of absolute perfection; for, in translating the

"Chiare, fresce, e dolce acque,"

by

"Clear and sparkling streams,
"*Warm'd* by the sunny beams,"

it seemed to me not worth while to give the translation a sense *opposite* to the original description of a fine spring, in order to suggest the idea of *warm water*. That the reader may completely judge of the carelessness of Voltaire, alluded to by Sir William Jones, in speaking of this ode, I refer him to the notes of the Memoires de Petrarque, Vol. II.

Whom only I acknowledge fair;
Boughs, that to remembrance bring
Sadly, bending as ye waved,
How her reclining form ye bare;
Turf, and worthiest to wear,
Flowers that, plucking, she disposed,
O'er her robe and bosom seen;
Air, celestially serene,
Where Love my wounds afresh unclosed;
O attend while I complain
Assembled here, to my last dying strain.

If, while I with Love apace
Pine, Heaven still, unpitying, choose
To see me victim proved of Grief,
Do not, in this haunt, a place
To my ashes cold refuse.
Death half defeating, the belief
That they here shall rest, relief,
At his awful hour, will yield.
Here possess'd of Peace, in port
Mariners sea-wearied court,

Preserve them, by some stone reveal'd,
Sad remains of one whom woes
Had harass'd once, but left in safe repose.

Haply to her favourite spot
May the cruel fair return,
On whom all hopes I cherish rest;
And, astonish'd, then my lot,
Casting round her eyes, discern,
Where I that day, for ever bless'd,
Hail'd entranced: O then her breast
Love or Pity sure will touch,
And the soft, escaping sigh
Heard, to Heaven shall plead on high
For my long errors,* known too much;
Drooping as the fair it spies,
And drying with her veil her beauteous eyes.

* The turn given to this passage is countenanced by the commentary in Vellutello's edition. It is suitable likewise to the poet's customary censure of his passion, and to the spirit of his introductory sonnet, "Voi, ch'as-"coltate in rime sparse," &c.

From the flaunting branches fell
Scatter'd leaves of many a flower
On her, who cast an angel's look,
Sitting, I remember well,
Cover'd with the amorous shower.
Some upon her robe they shook;
Some their way to tresses took,
And as gems in gold appear'd:
On the fountain's margent green
Some were, early, settling seen;
While others, o'er the soil revered,
Frolic circles form'd above,
And seem'd to cry, " Here reigns almighty Love!"

Often did I then exclaim,
Awed by her sweet presence, " Sure
" 'Tis one of the celestial band!"
So with air divine the dame
Fairest features, and the lure
Of magic smiles that none withstand,
Joining wonder to command,
Recollection charm'd away,

That, unconscious, with a sigh,
"Whence," I said, "and where am I?"
And seem'd to Heaven convey'd that day.
Since it pass'd, no place can please,
Save this; here only I exist in ease.

If thou wert tuneful as sincere,
Boldly might'st thou quit, my song,
The woods, and mingle with the courtly throng.

SONNET

EMBARKING ON THE PO, IN HIS WAY TO VERONA.

Well may'st thou bear these limbs, majestic Po,
At will, upon thy powerful, rapid waves;
But the free spirit that informs them braves
The strong compulsion of all power below,
And without need of skill, the way to show

To that bless'd branch,* whose presence still it craves,
Hastening, itself with outstretch'd pinions saves
From thee, though wind and oars their aid bestow.
Great king of rivers, proud, presumptuous stream,
That thwart'st† the Sun, when he brings on the day,
And leav'st the West, though thence more radiance beam;
Thou what is mortal of me may'st convey;
But all the rest (nor thou, horn'd flood, misdeem)
By Love is wing'd, and homeward takes its way.

* Of laurel, *i. e.* Laura.

† The course of the Po being east, it moved towards the sun, and from Laura.

SONNET

TRAVELLING HOMEWARDS FROM ITALY, ON THE BANKS OF THE RHONE.

O RAPID flood, that, from thy fountain hoarse,
Through Alpine deserts *gnawing*,* whence thy name,
Advancest, night and day, our path the same,
Where love leads me, thee only Nature's course;
Roll on (for sleep thou stay'st not, the resource
Of human Toil) and ere the ocean's claim
Thou yield, delay where greener meads proclaim,
In a serener air, Enchantment's force.
There shines my living Sun with favouring ray,
And gladdens, on thy left, the bordering flowers:
Perhaps (O chance desired!) she mourns my stay.

* Deriving it from the Latin and Italian, "rodere."

Kiss her light feet, or hand, among those bowers.
Tell her (and let that kiss, like language say)
" My will is prompt, but tardy are my powers."*

SONNET

ON THE GRIEF OF LAURA, SUPPOSED FOR THE DEATH OF HER MOTHER.

I saw a simple mortal shew, at will,
Angelic graces, so endow'd alone:
The recollection dear, though sad, is grown,
Nor can aught else the mind so justly fill.
Yes; tears I saw from sparkling eyes distil,
That Sol might envy, in full lustre shewn;
And potent plaints seem'd utter'd, in a tone
To make the mountains move, and streams stand still.

* The scriptural expression is here softened.

Grace, Feeling, Prudence, Dignity, and Grief,
Lamenting then, a sweeter concert made
Than blesses man, when Music yields relief;
And so the air by Virtue's sound was sway'd,
It was attentive all, and not a leaf,
Stirring, one moment's careless pause betray'd.

SONNET

ON A DISTINCTION SHEWN TO LAURA BY A PRINCE, SUPPOSED TO BE CHARLES SON OF THE KING OF BOHEMIA, AND AFTERWARDS THE EMPEROR CHARLES THE FOURTH.

One of rare powers, as of a royal race,
Unclouded judgment, and a lynx's eye,
Full in whose view the future seems to lie,
Has proved how little deeds his fame disgrace;
And, when gay dames assembled in the place
By Mirth allotted for the occasion high,

Among so many beauteous, could espy,
Without confusion, the most perfect face.
The fair in crowds sought forth, polite as wise,
To Age and Rank superior, with his hand
He mark'd his wish, and with attentions due
Approaching, kiss'd her forehead and her eyes;
An honour, praised by all the unbiass'd band;
But filling me with envy at the view!

SONNET

ON A WATER-PARTY OF LADIES, AMONG WHOM WAS LAURA, GOING DOWN THE RHONE IN A BOAT, AND RETURNING IN A CARRIAGE.

Twelve dames, with toil not unbecoming worn,
Rather twelve stars, and in the midst a Sun,
I saw sit gaily in a bark, that none
E'er equall'd, on a buoyant current born.
Seeking that sheep now Finery had shorn

To load its dress,* not Jason enter'd one
So glorious, nor the swain, by whom undone
Troy is yet doom'd its cruel fate to mourn.
In a triumphal car where, with delight,
All listen'd, then my Laura to the rest
Sung sweetly, seated from the troop not far,
As home they moved. O what a glorious sight!
To steer the bark, how, Typhis, wast thou bless'd,
And thou Automedon, to guide the car!

SONNET.

That window where my Sun is often seen
Refulgent, and the world's at morning's hours;†
And that, where Boreas blows, when Winter lowers,

* This is supposed to censure the fashions of the age.

† These particulars are related of Laura's house: Maurice de Seves, in 1540, says, that in the Fauxbourg of the Cordeliers, a small ancient house, built with yellow stone, was called Laura's house. It was watered by the Sorga, and was the second house to the left in the Faux-

And the short days reveal a clouded scene;
That bench of stone where, with a pensive mein,
My Laura sits, forgetting Beauty's powers;
Haunts where her shadow strikes the walls of flowers,
And her feet press the paths or herbage green:
The place where Love assail'd me with success.
And Spring, the fatal time, that, first observed,
Revives the keen remembrance every year;
With looks and words, that o'er me have preserved
A power, no length of time can render less,
Call to my eyes the sadly-soothing tear.

bourg, after passing the portail Peint. It adjoined to a tavern called the Cheval Blanc, and which was in existence not long before 1764, the date of the Memoires de Petrarque.

PETRARCH.

PART II.

POEMS AFTER THE DEATH OF LAURA.*

ODE.

If thou would'st have me suffer, Love, thy yoke,
Again (thy wish I see) new power begin
To shew, and fame unwonted win,
Lest at the trial I appear unbroke.
Fly to the sacred grave, and warm within
That heart, the seat of Virtue, and these eyes
Cheer with that mortal, fair and wise,

* The day is mentioned in 1327, when Petrarch first saw Laura; and she died on the same day, in 1348.

Whose loss now beggars, as she made me bless'd.
Yes; if 'tis justly by the world confess'd
Thy power to Heaven, and to the dark abyss
Below extends, (alas! in tracts remote,
Or other worlds, if we but note
That power surmised, we feel its force in this!)
Snatch from the cruel King his beauteous prey;
Again thy banners where she looks display.

Kindle those matchless eyes, again to beam,
Which were my honour'd guide; and the soft flame
That cheer'd the gloom of life, the same
That slumbering warms. How would it waking
burn?
Never the wearied hart so eager came,
Athirst, to sip the fountain or the stream,
As I sought forth the charms, I deem
Will oft to mournful Memory return.
For sad Experience from the past may learn,
My raving thoughts are deaf to Reason's voice;
As among wildering ways decoy'd,
We follow one, till soon it mocks our choice.

Now at thy call to come I do not deign:
Beyond thy power presume no more to reign.

Let me again the tones harmonious hear,
(Truly to hear) I still in fancy can,
Which, when their magic work began,
The passions lulling, proved the power of song;
While thoughts distemper'd from the breast of man
Were charm'd away, nor aught seem'd gloomy near.
By this my verse was made to appear
Above itself, ne'er since so sweet or strong:
And to the mind as faculties belong
To call up forms unreal, let my eyes
And ears their proper objects joy to find.
While others all, of every kind,
Are only near, my life I lightly prize.
Vainly dost thou thy singled victim doom,
While his first love is shrouded in the tomb.

Let the sweet glance returning bless my sight,
That soften'd my vain pride, as beams the snow;
And let my happy fortune show

Thee placed near her who sends them to my heart.
Swift take thy golden dart, and take thy bow;
Bring her pronouncing words that wake delight,
And hearing which I learn'd aright,
How stored with captivating charms thou art.
Bid not her tongue be still; that winning part
Had baits around to lure me, and which still
I crave; and plant on every side a snare
Within her light and curling hair:
I cannot without this thy power allow.
Spread with thy hands those tresses to the gales;
And then I may confess thy power prevails.

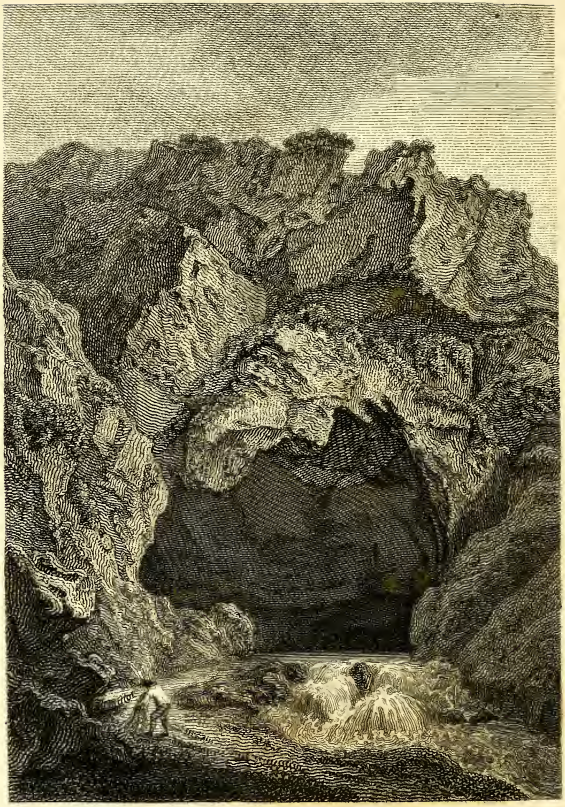
Ne'er might I from the golden snares be free
Of ringlets, left to charm with Nature's grace;
Nor from the influence of that face
Which with its sweet severity inthrall'd,
Which busy Fancy still delights to trace;
Which kept for ever love unchanged in me,
As close to many a fading tree,
Those plants, of Venus and Apollo call'd!
But, since the gift of Liberty, appall'd

I have beheld, presented me by Death;
And thou canst find none else, whome'er thou choose,
To second thy ambitious views,
My pride may dare thee till my latest breath.
Thy day is pass'd; if thou have lost the arms
I dreaded once, thy rage no more alarms.

Those arms were vivid eyes, whence, tipp'd with fire,
Darts show'ring, well-directed by thy hand,
Which Reason could not e'er withstand,
Fulfill'd Heaven's will; the charm of modest Mirth,
Or feeling Thought; Silence; or, at command,
Gay Laughter; courteous ways that awe inspire;
Chaste looks, and words we might desire
To banish Vice impure, as spells, from earth;
An air, as seen in one of heavenly birth,
Mildly benevolent, and often praised;
Grace, when she sate, or when she stood, in all
That doubt, which Memory can recall,
What winning posture most enchanted, raised;
Possess'd of arms thus victory to insure,
Thou madest me yield; but I am now secure.

O'er other souls Heaven gave thee power, to change
The object of their love in many ways;
Mine, of a different mould, obeys
Another law, Heaven's varied works to show.
Yet howe'er gain'd, no joy does Freedom raise;
But sad, I say, "O wont this region strange,
"Thy blissful mansion left, to range,
"What doom, pure spirit, plunging us in woe,
"Untimely call'd thee from the world below,
"Making regret arise from what we saw
"Of lofty Virtue, never equall'd yet?"——
I may not, Love, to thee submit,
Nor fear thy vengeance on my head to draw.
Thy bow thus strain'd, to pierce me vainly tries;
My safety's signal were her closing eyes.

Death has absolved me from thy laws,
O Love, since, for her heavenly dwelling, she
I mourn has left me sad and free.



Drawn by Brandoin. Engraved by J. Landseer.

Vaucluse.

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SONNET.

How often to my long-beloved retreat
Hastening, where calm and peaceful all appears,
As soft I sigh, beneath my feeble feet
The well known sod I drench with trickling tears!
How often, wandering from my lonely seat,
To the wood's wild recesses, free from fears,
My thoughts I rivet on that aspect sweet
Death veils, nor hence his stroke invited hears!
Now, in the form of Nymph or Goddess fair,
From Sorga's waves emerging, while I gaze,
On the green bank I see her, seated there!
Now treading, as along the bank she strays,
The flowers, a beauteous mortal; and her air
Tells me, with pity she my state surveys!

SONNET.

Zephyr returns, and the mild Season, seen
With herbs and flowers, his pleasing train, in state;
Procne is heard, soft Philomel her fate
Laments, and Spring's own colours grace the scene.
The laughing flowers delight, and heavens serene:
Jove on his fairest daughter looks elate:
All creatures warn'd, through space, obedient wait
The will of Love, and own his impulse keen.
But, wretch, for me those sighs return alone
That with a wounded heart for her I send,
Who still on high retains it as her own:
And the sweet song of birds, and flowers that blend
All hues, and woman's gentle manners, grown
Importunate, like deserts dread offend.

THE TWELFTH PYTHIAN ODE

OF

PINDAR.

TO MIDAS OF AGRIGENTUM, VICTOR ON THE FLUTE.

1. 1.

PROPITIOUS hear, O happy seat
Of social Joy, the fairest * own'd
Of earthly towns, and Proserpine's retreat;
That placed, as on the banks enthroned

* Mr. Green has omitted, in his translation, the piece of history contained in the expression καλλίστα βροτέων πολέων; but I thought that not an uninteresting one, which shewed the general opinion of Agrigentum, with respect to *beauty* probably just before the taste and policy of Pericles had rendered Athens so unrivalled in the productions of art.

Of Agragas, behold'st thy vallies gay
With flocks and many a mirthful swain
Subject to thee, and prosperous by thy sway;
With Heaven's and Earth's kind will receive my strain:
Receive too, Midas, him it crowns, who bore
From Greece that Art's respected prize,
Pallas (the Gorgon weltering in her gore),
Invented from the monstrous kindred's cries.

1. 2.

Sadly their voice the prostrate dead
Bemoan'd, when Perseus could subdue
One of the three fierce sisters, and her head
His trophy, with its serpents, view.
For feats regretted wide, the Chief arrived
At sea-girt Seriphus, his wandering ceased:
The race * of Phorcus high, of sight deprived,
And Polydectes,† shuddering at his feast,

* The surviving Gorgons, Stheno and Euryala.

† A tribute being expected by this king from his guests, Perseus appeared, carrying the head of Medusa.

His mother's charms a master's prize survey'd,
Owed to the son of Danaë, on that day,
Their mournful fate, when, safe through mightier aid,
He bore Medusa's features fair away.

2. 1.

To him they owed it, sprung from Love
Celestial, and the golden shower;
But when his foe the Goddess, from above,
Sees vanquish'd by her heavenly power,
From plaintive sounds, that o'er a sister wakes
Euryala, while pleased her ears
Drink in their sweetness, lasting laws she makes
To rule the enchanting Art that mortals cheers.
Soon, perfect by her dexterous toil, conferr'd
On man, and hence an honour'd art,
'Tis at the games, in winning accents, heard
To rouse with eager hope Ambition's heart:

2. 2.

Soft as the skilful breath is born
Through well-wrought brass, and slender reeds,

That near the city * of the Graces, torn
From their old haunts, the beauteous meads
And woods, Cephisus laving moves along,
Are doom'd to witness festive joy and mirth
In the light dance, and in the fervid song.
Fame without toil is hopeless here on earth:
Yet, unexpected oft, as late † to thee,
Success arrives, and, by Heaven's awful will,
While oft the vain their labour fruitless see,
New prospects sad Despair with comfort fill.

* Orchomenus, a city of Bœotia, sacred to the Graces.

† He had gained the victory, as the Scholiast says, after breaking his instrument.

TRANSLATION OF A LATIN ODE BY GRAY.

O DOOM'D the barbarous seats with me
To visit, where disturb'd we see
Strife's restless look, and hear his sound,
And the gownmen bustle round;

Say, how much better, in the shade
Of some old elm reposing laid,
In books all irksome thoughts to lose,
And invoke the friendly Muse?

For oft I chase the thoughts away
Of Care, as o'er the fields I stray
In sweet poetic trance, and leave
Scarce the dewy scene at eve.

And in each hill, where'er I go,
Parnassus seems his woods to shew
Outstretch'd; and in each fountain clear
Aganippe cool appear.

Spring and the sportive Nymphs have smiled
To spy me in recesses wild,
Scenting the violets, that there
Load with sweets the morning air;

As, thrown at random on the grass,
I mark the playful current pass,
That, gently check'd by many a stone,
Sends a pleasing plaintive tone.

Thus, when the Season's earliest flowers
Were seen, I pass'd the artless hours,
As long as Zephyr to each eye
Free from clouds preserved the sky.

Nor yet I leave the fields and ease;
Nor Phœbus more would Clitie please.

(Though now the winds are cold and rude,
And the summer changing view'd.)

For when on rural labours gay,
On plains and hills, he shoots his ray,
The East, with gold and purple, far
Tinging, from his radiant car;

Wistful I mark his wondrous course;*
Nor less when, with abated force,
He spreads, where Calpe's rocks aspire,
Sweet his temper'd hues of fire:

Till by degrees his lustre grown
More languid, scarcely now are shown
The gaudy clouds, nor shortly seen,
Fades at once the landscape green.

* This poetical idea is in a rejected stanza of the Elegy.—

"Him have we seen ———
"With wistful eyes pursue the setting sun."

O happy were I (nor might then
My fortune be to rise again!)
If falling thus, in death so bless'd,
I could sink in peace to rest!

No envy should I bear the God,
When by his steeds Olympus trod
Beheld him, with whole rays on high
Dazzle each astonish'd eye.

THE END.

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